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A SIN'S SHADOW

-:- Or, -:-

Meryl Starnes' Secret

By Ella Martin

CHAPTER I.

TERRACE PLACE.

THE mansion was surrounded by a succession of broad terraces—so many of them that the rambling old buildings seemed on quite an eminence. On the spacious lawns grew trees and shrubbery, among which the songbirds made their homes. It was because of these terraces that the estate, situated in the sunny Southland, was called Terrace Place.

Meryl Starnes, the niece, and daughter by adoption, of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Starnes, was in appearance like a delicate, pale blossom; and of late it was noticed that an inertia of manner characterized her every movement. The sparkle had left her violet eyes, and the color departed from her cheeks.

This fair girl knew nothing of her parentage, and never until recently had she shown any curiosity concerning her past. But simultaneously with her failing spirits began the casual references to her parents, whom she could not remember; these were of a nature calculated to draw forth some explanation about her birth. What caused her lassitude and the faraway look in her eyes was the question that troubled Meryl's foster-parents. Was it due to failing health or a secret love? They had no means of knowing, but neither could believe the girl capable of a clandestine affair.

And yet Meryl had a secret—one that was gnawing at her heart and draining the blood from her cheeks—aye, sapping the strength from her body, leaving her step languid and slow. In the attic one day, one never-to-be-forgotten day, she had found, in an old escritoire, a packet of papers. And she had read a number of them before she had remembered that she had no right—that they were not intended for her eyes; that she, of all persons, should never have seen them. If she had but read the ones remaining, how much of heartache and misery might have been spared her! But what is more cruel or relentless than Fate?

On one of the balmiest days of summer, when the climbing roses scented the air around the verandas, and the great rosebushes on the first terrace were loaded with their fragrant bloom, Meryl, in her white gown, went slowly down the marble steps of the several terraces, and on beyond till she reached the wooded park.

Mr. Starnes watched her from the library window, beside which he sat with a cigar in his mouth and the morning paper upon his knees.

"Now, I wonder what has come over the bonny lass," he mused. "Is she in love? And if so, with whom? And why has it

taken the bloom from her cheeks, the light from her eyes? I warrant there is not a young man in her set who would not reciprocate any amount of affection she might condescend to bestow. But her pride would not permit her to give her love unsought. It was pride and wounded love that broke her mother's heart; and like mother, like daughter. At any rate, there is something wrong with the girl.

"Josephine!" he called, as he beheld his wife passing the door.

Mrs. Starnes entered in answer to his summons. She was a society leader, but nevertheless a kind and affectionate mother to the orphan child of her dead sister.

"What is it, Charles?" she queried, as she came forward and stood by his chair, her eyes following the slender figure in white as it moved slowly down the steps. Her husband did not speak, or even take his eyes away until Meryl had disappeared among the shrubbery. Then he glanced up into her face.

"Josie, what is the secret of her altered appearance? She is fading away before our very eyes. Is her health failing?"

"She says not."

"Is there something on her mind?"

"There must be."

"She has not learned her mother's story? You have let slip no thoughtless word, Josephine?"

"No; and yet she questioned me yesterday about her father, whom she has never before mentioned."

"And you told her——?"

"Nothing."

"It is all very strange! I must have a physician out to see her."

"It needs no physician to tell that her malady is of the mind. It may be that she will cheer up a bit after the guests from the city arrive, and she meets Norman Heath once more. I have noticed that she has appeared less spirited ever since he went abroad."

Unconscious of the anxiety she was causing the hearts that were fond of her, Meryl continued her way thru the park till she came to a little artificial lake. And finally she seated herself on a low gnarled limb of a tree whose branches drooped over the water. Here she sat for a long time, never stirring, with her eyes fixed on the water lilies trembling on the bosom of the little lake.

"Everything is a sham!" she said under her breath. "Everything is only seeming. I, even, who would be otherwise if I could, am a fraud—aye, worse than that, a blot—a stain on the fair earth. Oh, for a nook somewhere in which to hide away from the world, where society-bred people could not stare at me if my secret should become known! Oh, those haughty dames, without a blot upon their lineage, how coldly they would draw aloof if they knew of the stigma that rests upon me!

"And I must face the world while I carry around a double burden. For Norman—oh, he is false—false!"

For a moment there flashed into the violet eyes of the girl the fire of other days; for a moment there rose in her voice the vim characteristic of her spirited nature. Then she slowly sank back into that inertia of mind and body that had lately enveloped her whole being.

Norman Heath had by every look and word shown his love for her during the previous season; and if she was not now his affianced bride it was certainly not his fault, but was due rather to her own shyness. But she loved him—loved him with an abandon of mind he little dreamed of on account of the maidenly pride that had kept him at a distance.

Now rumor said he was the slave of another; the dark eyes of a bewitching siren held him in thrall. He had returned from abroad long ago, she knew; but he had dallied in Richmond at the side of the dashing beauty who had enslaved him. Madge Raven was the name of this beautiful siren, and somehow, to Meryl, it seemed to have a bold sound. There were compromising reports concerning the lady in question. It was said that she was an adventuress, and that there was gypsy blood in her veins. But that was not all!

However, despite these rumors, she was inadvertently invited, along with the friends who sheltered her, to Terrace Place. Meryl could have prevented the invitation by one little word had her pride permitted her to speak it.

"But no!" she had said, with her head held high. "I may be a nameless waif—a mere nobody—but I will not sacrifice pride for love's sake, when it must be done to the detriment of my rival. Moreover, it is too late now to think of Norman; the secret of my birth stands between us."

She lowered herself from the limb and stood on the brink of the little lake, looking on the still waters as if she longed for rest beneath their surface. As she turned slowly, reluctantly, away, she gave a start, exhibiting the first emotion she had shown for many a day; for there directly in her path stood Norman Heath. So deep had been her reverie she had not heard his footfalls on the soft turf, and the surprise she displayed was genuine.

"Meryl," he said, "do you not welcome me?"

He held out his hand, and she was obliged to put hers into it; but it was done in a cold, listless manner, tho she smiled bravely as she spoke the words of welcome she deemed most suitable.

"I called at the house," Norman said lightly, "and they told me I would find you here. A rather uncanny spot, isn't it? Especially as dusk is approaching! Do you see how late it is? And you with no wrap!"

Norman Heath had felt the change in his old sweetheart from the first. Now he noted more clearly her altered appearance. He made no comment, however, but drawing her hand within his arm he turned toward the house.

"You should not have sent me away, Meryl," he said, after an interval of silence which was growing oppressive. "I could have taken better care of you than you have taken of yourself. You look like a faded blossom, tho you were always delicate."

A pang wrenched the girl's heart! Of course she must seem faded beside the voluptuous beauty of his new inamorata. But this placing the blame on her shoulders aroused her old-time spirit.

"Sent you away?" she exclaimed, in a questioning tone; and each word was cold as steel. Ah, the iron had entered her soul, and never again would she be entirely free from bitterness!

"Well, at any rate," he answered, manlike, "you did not try to keep me."

Her lips curled slightly, and withdrawing her hand from his arm under pretext of holding up her gauze-like skirts, she walked on beside him without support. He felt that she had placed him further away from her by this act, and he did not offer his arm again. They talked together as of old, Meryl rallying herself in an effort to hide the change in her feelings.

"I am a little in advance of my invitation," Norman said, "but I could not wait longer. I am stopping at Richmond for a while. I took a run down in my car for a short call."

"Yes?" and again her lips curled in scorn. He had been in Richmond for weeks, and had not taken the trouble until now to make the journey from the city to Terrace Place. What had caused him to visit her at this late day? Was his infatuation for the dark-browed beauty ended? No matter. Everything was over that held any hope or interest for her. What booted it if he were false or true?

He noted her silence and looked keenly at her.

They were out of sight of the little lake, when suddenly she turned. "Wait here," she said, "I will be back in a moment. I—I had forgotten—I dropped my handkerchief by the lake."

"Let me return for it," he urged, and would have hastened away, but she motioned him back and entered the park before he could stay her footsteps. He followed slowly instead of remaining where she left him.

Why was she so anxious to recover a handkerchief when she must have dozens of them? he wondered. And why had she not permitted him to return for it? She was changed toward him, he could see that, and he began to believe she had heard of his attentions to Madge Raven.

"What fools men are!" he muttered. "What weak, susceptible fools, not to know the sham from the real!"

At that moment he came in sight of the miniature lake, and beheld, without being himself observed, a tableau that surprised and troubled him!

CHAPTER II.

A DOUBTING HEART.

THE scene that Norman Heath looked upon with surprise was shadowy and indistinct. And afterward he wondered if he had not been dreaming. He paused as he came in sight of the lake, for he saw Meryl stoop close to the brink and pick up the handkerchief. He knew then the excuse for her return had not been merely a pretext to rid herself of his society, as he had at first supposed. But he believed she had another and more important reason, for just then a man stepped from the shadows and confronted her. She did not appear in the least startled. Instead she paused and listened to what he had to say. And was it an optical illusion, or did he see a note change hands? He felt sure of the fact, but he could not tell which of the two was the recipient of the message—Meryl or the stranger. The dusk among the trees was deepening and the figures were shrouded in gloom.

A swift contraction of the heart showed him how great was his love for the girl he had for a time forgotten. It was patent to him that Meryl had a lover whom she met clandestinely. If he had stayed by her side this would never have happened. This was his punishment, and he must not murmur if she had turned to another in his absence.

He had been mad—under a spell—fascinated by glorious dark eyes that spoke of love in every glance! He had yielded himself to the influence of this passion with nothing to salve his conscience when he thought of Meryl Starnes except the fact that she had not encouraged his suit because of her maidenly reticence.

"Ah, Meryl," he whispered contritely, as he walked slowly back to the spot where she had left him, "I never knew until this moment how much I loved you!"

If she would but overlook the past, he thought, his lapse in loyalty to her, he would forgive any wandering away on her part. He would not question her concerning the affair, if only she would come back to him.

A moment later he found her at his side, and in her hand was the handkerchief. She held it up to view with a faint smile of triumph as her only explanation. And as she fell into step at his side she reached the hand next to him and gathered up her skirts, leaving no chance for him to offer her his arm. In her other hand she held the recovered handkerchief of costly lace and linen, drooping gracefully from her fingers.

Her every movement was grace itself. How restful her presence seemed! It was like a cool eventide after the scorching heat of the daytime compared with that of Madge Raven. A great longing came over him to possess her—then and there to gather her into his arms and claim her promise to be his bride.

He paused suddenly and stood still. She turned and waited.

"Meryl, forgive me!" He held out his hand.

"Yes," she said. "It does not matter now." But she did not place her hand in his.

"Meryl, have you ceased to love me?"

"Ceased is not the word, Mr. Heath. You forget yourself."

He caught her hand in his.

"Meryl, my love! Come back to me, even as I have come back to you! I will ask no questions! I will forget even what I saw just now on the banks of the lake—if you will only forgive me, and forget! I love you, dearest! I have never loved another."

She was startled into emotion instantly. He had seen the stranger by the lake! What else had he seen? How much of her secret had he learned?

"So you spied upon me!" she flashed, the fire of indignation lighting her eyes. "What is it to you? Go back to Richmond, Norman Heath—back to Madge Raven! There is no question of forgiveness between us two. You were in no way disloyal to me, for you were not bound!"

"Not exactly," he answered meekly; "but that was not my fault. And I ask you now to be my wife—if you can overlook my folly. It was nothing, darling, but a short-lived infatuation."

"It is too late!" she said. "Do not speak of it again."

"Meryl!" he cried, "tell me all! There is more on your mind than I am responsible for. Confide in me and let me help you."

A startled glance shot from her eyes to his. Her lips moved, but no articulation came from them. Confide in him! And he of all persons the one she most desired to hide the truth from! But could she hide it long? Would he not sooner or later ferret out the facts unless she roused herself and did something to allay his suspicions? A moment she consulted with her heart, then she said:

"Norman, it is not that I cannot overlook what you are pleased to consider disloyalty to me, for I let you go when you would have stayed had I willed it. And maybe if I had let myself be won I could have loved you then. But now, however I may regret it, I cannot get back to the state of mind of last summer. You have come into my life and passed out of it, so far as especial interest in you is concerned. Henceforth you must be to me as any other friend. It can never be different; for, mark you, there is nothing ever so dead as love when once it is slain."

"Slain, Meryl! Did I do that? Did my conduct kill the love you had for me?"

"Perhaps I should have said when once it has died for lack of anything on which to exist—when once it has starved to death."

"Meryl, you break my heart!"

She roused herself again and tried to correct the impression she had given him.

"No, Norman, I have not put it rightly yet. I have made it appear that it could have been avoided. It is only that I am older—a little. I have changed. What has been can never be again. You cannot regret it more than I. But please accept it as final, and realize with me that it is forever too late."

Silently they turned and walked on together. There was a mist in Norman's eyes, an ache in his heart, which he felt would be there for all time. And now his manner was as dreary and hopeless as hers. She had loved him and outgrown it, and a love outgrown is lost forever.

"Meryl," he said, with unsteady voice, "tell me one thing: Do you love another?"

She stood still and looked at him, surprised into betraying how impossible she thought such a thing could be.

"Another! Oh, no!"

And there flashed from those violet eyes a look of adoration which undid all she had meant her words to accomplish. His doubting heart took courage.

Still, the meeting by the lake puzzled him. He would discover her secret and assist her in whatever dilemma she found herself, he determined, since she would not give him her confidence. She loved him still! He felt sure of it! But something stood between them other than his flirtation with Madge Raven—something she considered all paramount.

A silence fell between them that lasted until they reached the house.

He did not remain long at Terrace Place, but returned to town after a half-hour spent in conversation with the family. After his departure, noting Meryl standing upon the veranda, watching the road down which his car had disappeared, Mrs. Starnes said to her husband:

"Do you think you will need a physician from the city to diagnose Meryl's ailment?" And she laughed meaningly.

"Ah," he answered, agreeing with her view of the case, "the physician, I think, has been here."

The couple continued to look upon the matter in this light, for Meryl began to perceive the necessity of appearing less depressed if she was to guard her secret successfully, and before others she was more animated than usual. To hide her heart she appeared interested in things that were of no moment to her. She must prevent her foster-parents from learning of her unhappiness. They must not know for their own sakes that she was living under a shadow of sin—another's sin—and because of that she was bearing the burden of a hopeless love.

When she had faced the stranger on the banks of the lake she had not seemed surprised, because the agonized state of her mind at that moment made an incident of that sort appear of little account. And Norman had noticed her manner and misjudged her. The fact was that she had never seen the man before. But when he apologized for addressing her and explained his presence there, she had listened. She had taken the note from his hand, knowing from his explanation that it concerned the subject that preyed upon her mind night and day.

That night before retiring she unfolded the letter and read its contents. As its full significance swept over her she felt her senses reel. With desperate energy she roused herself, and tearing the paper into atoms she flung them into the ashes in the grate. By the time the last tiny fragment had fluttered from sight all strength had left her. She sank into a chair overcome by weakness, just as the door opened and her foster-mother appeared on the threshold. Meryl had heard footsteps, and with a desperate effort had destroyed the note in time to preserve her secret.

CHAPTER III.

MADGE RAVEN.

A WEEK after the events of the preceding chapter the guests began to arrive at the Starnes mansion. Terrace Place was a favorite spot in which to spend a few weeks in summer, and Mr. and Mrs. Starnes were seldom alone at this season of the year for long at a time. Life in the country was too dull for them without a houseful of company. Only Meryl was happy without the society of others. And now even solitude had lost its charms for her; so what mattered it if there were no more seclusion in the house or the grounds?

There was but one among the guests that had never been there before. This was Madge Raven, a beauty dark, sparkling and vivacious! Her personality, her bewildering charm of manner, was the key to her ability to attract the opposite sex—a power which she gloried in for its own sake. Lately, a new rumor had spread among her own set concerning this brilliant woman, who seldom failed to fascinate all who came under the spell of her witching black eyes. It was to the effect that she had a husband living from whom she was not even divorced. No one seemed to know the source of the rumor, nor whether the story was well-founded.

Norman Heath watched his former sweetheart closely when Madge was presented to her, but he detected no embarrassment or coldness of manner to-

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ward her rival. She either did not fear this woman's influence over him, or she had ceased to care what he did with his affections. When he saw her unaffected courtesy toward her late rival he was more than ever convinced that it was something other than his attentions to Madge Raven that troubled her mind. That she was still bearing the burden of grief, whatever it was, he could see, tho she tried so hard to hide the fact.

"Meryl, do you love me?" he asked one day, when he found her for a moment alone.

"No, longer love you?" she repeated absently. "Did I ever love you?" Then rousing herself a little, she added: "If so, it was so long ago I have forgotten it."

Evidently other matters had crowded even the memory of that love out of her brain. Then the spirit of jealousy entered his heart, and he began to believe there was another who claimed her thoughts. He would bide his time, and some day he would discover who his rival was, and then—well, what then? If she preferred another to him, what was he going to do about it?

He brooded a good deal over the matter, and as a result of his gloomy attitude he took to strolling down by the lake. For it was here he had witnessed the meeting between Meryl and another. He had hoped that he might eventually come upon the stranger lingering about the spot in anticipation of a second accidental meeting with Meryl. Perhaps he might be able to worm something out of the fellow that would furnish a key to the mystery of the girl's despondency.

To his amazement it was Madge Raven who met the stranger by the lake, and he had about as good a view of the scene as before. He had come upon them by chance, and ere he realized who the couple were he heard Madge say:

"It is to you I owe the loss of his love! Why are you my enemy?"

"I am not your enemy so much as I am Norman Heath's friend," replied the man.

"And why his friend, since it must be at my expense?"

"Not his friend so much as a friend of the woman he really loves. He never loved you—he was only infatuated. You have your mother's fatal beauty, your mother's false and cruel heart!"

She stamped her foot impatiently.

"Never mind all that! In what way could you benefit the woman he really loves"—with a sneering accent on the word—"by telling him tales on me?"

"The woman he loves loves him," he answered directly.

"Ah, I see," she muttered. "Well, I shall find this woman out; I shall discover in spite of Norman Heath's flirting proposition who the woman is, and I will see to it that he never marries her! If I mistake not, you love her also, and you would wish me to expose you then. How very fortunate she is, to possess the devotion of two men so much men!"

"Why not go in and win her yourself?" she added mockingly. "You are not too old. You love her away from him and leave him—to me!" Her voice grew earnest as she concluded, as if the last sentence had been an afterthought, and she had been impressed with it in the saying. "Say, dad!"—her voice became silky, cossing—"why not?"

It was his turn to become impatient.

"Not that name!" he cried fiercely; "you have no right—you know that as well as I do. But how came you possessed of the knowledge that I betrayed your past to Mr. Heath?"

"You are the only one this side of the Atlantic who knows it."

"I shall not attempt to deny it," he replied. "Pray let us end this interview; it was not of my seeking."

"One moment," she said, imperiously. "Let us understand each other. You have made your enmity clear to me. Now listen: did love Norman Heath? I was not fooling him as I had fooled others. He is the only man I ever did love! He deserted me at your command without even trying to verify the tale you told him. My love changed to hate at the coldness of his manner, the way in which he turned from me. I am too proud to cling to a man who has once slighted my love. Hate is a fierce satisfaction. Some day I shall discover whom he loves, trust me for that, and I will part them! I will wring the heart of this girl who loves him, just because she is dear to you. And I will make Norman Heath suffer for the way in which he has treated me. Henceforth I am the sworn enemy of the three who have caused me pain—to my sorrow! You know me, as you knew my mother before me! I am my mother's own child! Beware of my vengeance!"

Norman Heath withdrew from the scene at this juncture, not caring to spy upon them; but he was glad he had overheard the much of their conversation. It put him on his guard. Madge must never mistrust his love for Meryl Starnes, lest she would work the girl some deadly harm. And now he was placed in a trying position; for even tho he paid Madge no attention, if he ceased abruptly his attentions to Meryl the latter would be quick to notice it, and it would widen the breach between them.

At first he thought of going away; but he dared not leave Meryl at the mercy of Madge Raven. If she should chance to learn that he had once paid court to Miss Starnes she would divine all—that he had deserted her to go back to his old love as soon as he had discovered her unworthiness. He could not leave Meryl unguarded, but must watch over her without her unknown enemy suspecting it.

When he first caught sight of Madge in conversation with this man he believed he had found the one Meryl had met in the dusk of that other day. But the words he had overheard proved that he had met this person before. And the man who had warned him to go back to his old love could not be enamored of her himself. Still, and his heart beat suffocatingly, it was for Meryl's sake he had sought to break up the attachment between himself and Madge Raven.

He was so deeply absorbed in thought by the time Madge overtook him that he was startled when she coyly slipped her hand within his arm.

"Dreaming of your sweetheart, I suppose," she ventured, in a manner that showed she meant to lose no time in going about her work of discovery.

A man is so liable to bungle when what it was his late words were meant to conceal. But he felt that Meryl had left the arbor and was on her way to the lake, most likely to meet the man whom Madge had accidentally encountered. And this man loved her enough to sacrifice his happiness for hers, while she believed his own love was really Madge Raven's. Would she not eventually turn to this other whose devotion was so great that he was watching over her and save her she wedded the man of her choice? His trouble had all grown out of his own folly, and if he should lose Meryl it would be a just punishment.

He was in torture. In imagination he saw his love and the stranger together among the trees at the side of the little lake. But he could not turn and follow her in an endeavor to prevent the meeting without defeating the very purpose that had reconciled him to Madge's presence thus far. He must lead her suspicions away from Meryl. And so he went on toward the house, carrying on the conversation as best he could, while his

"What fools men are!" he muttered.

pitted against a woman's wit, that he feared she would discover his love's identity before they reached the first terrace. He did bungle, but not in the way she expected, and it left her no wiser than before.

"I have no sweetheart," he answered drearily. Then looking into her face with sudden animation, as a thought of how to mislead her entered his head, he added earnestly: "You know I loved you, Madge, and you know what parted us. My God!" he murmured beneath his breath, as looking up suddenly he beheld Meryl Starnes in her white dress standing in the door of the summerhouse close to where they were passing, and knew that she must have heard every word.

A moment and the figure in the doorway had withdrawn; but Norman had observed that she had grown white to the lips, a fact which Madge evidently did not notice, as she was absorbed in watching his face for traces of the secret which she had but known it, lay in the blanched features and pain-filled eyes of Meryl Starnes. A thrill of pleasure shot thru the young man's heart. He knew now, no matter what the secret of her meeting with another might be, that she loved him. For only a short time ago he had denied to her ever entertaining anything but a passing infatuation for the woman she had now overheard him making love to.

He dared not glance back toward the summerhouse lest Madge should mistrust mind was elsewhere. But the suspense was unbearable!

When the morning dawned he found his worst fears realized. Meryl Starnes was missing, and a prolonged search for her resulted in complete failure. Madge suggested that the lake be dragged for her body. But Norman knew that she would not be found beneath the water filled any mine of the lake. He had no fear of that. He believed she had turned to one who loved her truly and unselfishly.

There was consternation among the inmates of Terrace Place when her absence was discovered; but no one guessed that the secret of her disappearance was in the possession of Madge Raven, her rival and bitterest enemy!

Next week's Ledger will contain the concluding chapters of this interesting story. You will miss a great treat if you do not read it to the end. We will give you constantly the very best stories of entertainment and instruction. If you do send in your subscription and take the Ledger regularly, if you are not doing so. You will not regret it.

* * *

Tragedy of a Freezer.

"It takes a water ice longer to freeze than ice cream, anyhow," encouraged Mrs. Pashley.

Delia, the queen of the kitchen, groaned and stopped turning the handle of the freezer. "Longer, is it," she inquired acidly. "Well, I've turned this long enough to make water ice for all the people in the State of Illinois!"

"I'm sure," said Mrs. Pashley, with the nervousness of a woman who is having friends in to dinner, "that it's going to freeze all right, Delia! Why, it's that perfectly lovely juice left from the preserved strawberries. And so rich!"

"I tell you," persisted Delia, "it ain't a-going to freeze! It's too rich, that's what's the trouble!"

"Nonsense!" said Mrs. Pashley. "I'll set the table for you," she ended, placatingly.

"Thank you," said Delia, mournfully. "If I ever freeze this I'm afraid I wouldn't have time for that or anything else! But I won't even have time to cook the dinner!"

"Let me turn awhile," said Mrs. Pashley, "you must be doing something else!"

"Is the ice cream done?" asked Jimmy Pashley, appearing in the kitchen door.

"Go away, Jimmy!" ordered his mother. "Of course it isn't done yet. It takes time to freeze a water ice! If I were using cream, now——"

"Gee!" said Jimmy. "I thought it was ice cream! And I could lick the dasher! Kin I have some——"

"Go away!" repeated his mother. "I think it is getting harder now, Delia!"

"When kin I have some?" persisted Jimmy.

"At dinner time," said his mother. "If you don't go away and leave those berries alone, Jimmy Pashley——"

Delia had opened the freezer. Inside was a soupy mass, ice cold but most evidently not in the condition of becoming solid.

"I told you so!" said Delia gloomily.

"Jimmy!" cried his mother. "Go right down to the corner candy store and ask them to send a brick of tutti frutti by 7 o'clock!"

"Kin I have some?" asked Jimmy, and then fled before his mother's look.

He returned presently.

"They ain't got any tutti frutti," he announced. "They have vanilla fury an' peach an' pineapple an' car'mel an'——"

"Have them send anything!" cried his mother, who was peeling tomatoes and making a bad job of it. "And hurry!"

"I told them," Jimmy announced again later, "to put in a lot of things—car'mel an' pineapple ice an' vanilla fury an'——"

"Oh!" groaned his mother, weakly. "How awful——"

"Whee-e-e!" squealed Delia, who had again looked into the abandoned freezer. "If it ain't freezing, all by itself!"

"What?" called Mrs. Pashley with sudden hope. "I did so count on that strawberry ice cream tonight. I'm turning it then, Delia—and Jimmy, you go tell them we don't want their mixed brick of cream!"

"Oh, ma!" wailed Jimmy.

"Hurry!" cried Mrs. Pashley.

Returning fifteen minutes later Jimmy found himself seized by a hysterical mother. "Jimmy!" she cried, "go right back and tell them to send the ice cream after all! This miserable stuff melts all up again when we turn the dasher!"

Jimmy rushed off once more. "Let it stand," said Mrs. Pashley. "If is should chance to freeze by itself, Delia, you may have it if you have any company of your own!"

"It's too late to mix a brick!" Jimmy cried, rushing in. "They'll send you plain chocolate!"

"I hate chocolate!" moaned Mrs. Pashley. "Oh, why did I try a frozen dessert!"

At the salad course Delia whispered in Mrs. Pashley's ear that the ice cream had not yet come. Mrs. Pashley was an imitation of a hostess with nothing on her mind to worry about. As she removed the plates Delia whispered it to it had come. Mrs. Pashley clutched her heart.

The ice cream appeared at last and Mrs. Pashley served it.

"Thank you," said guest number one, "but I never touch ice cream."

"I'm the same," said guest number two when pressed, "but chocolate disagrees with me."

"Gee!" gasped Jimmy. "Kin I have three helpings, ma?"

* * *

First Beauty Doctor.

The first "beauty doctor" to gain wide celebrity was a Sicilian woman, not a poor shopkeeper in Palermo, but best known by his assumed title as Count Alessandro di Cagliostro. He was born 173 years ago and was educated in a monastery. As a young man he went to Rome, where he met and married a beautiful girl, says an exchange.

The pair then traveled over Europe under the names of Count and Countess Cagliostro, going about in a magnificent coach-and-four, and seeking access to the highest society of the countries they visited. They made a fortune by selling a "wine of Egypt," disposed of in drops as being more precious than nectar, the use of which was alleged to restore vigor and youth and beauty to the aged and wrinkled man and woman. The Countess Seraphina adduced herself as a living evidence of the efficacy of the elixir, asserting that she was past 60 and had a son who was a veteran soldier. The Count claimed to be an octogenarian. For years they carried on a highly profitable trade in Egyptian drops, beauty waters, wrinkle eradicators and love philters, but at length, after long enjoying the favor of cardinals and bishops, kings, princes and nobles, Cagliostro was thrown into prison and his wife confined in a convent, where both died.

The Mandalore Princess

-:- Or, -:-

The Great Ruby of Roo

By Will Gage Carey

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CHAPTER VIII.

IN THE dim light of dawn we could make out nothing but the bobbing box was being carried in toward a narrow strand, from the far side of which the black cliffs arose sheer and forbidding, precipitous, cutting off entirely the view inland. This was fortunate. We would make a landing unobserved, and amongst those craggy peaks and bowlders find a place for concealment, until we could get the lay of the land, and formulate plans by which we might hope to achieve the purpose which had lured us to Zanora.

The water became more and more shallow; soon our freight-case grated upon the pebbly shore. Then, between up without violence, the wind having become merely a stiff breeze, and the shoal, over which we were passing, gradually breaking much of the force of the larger waves.

We jumped from the box and waded in to the strand, where we sank down upon the white sand, wearied to a sort of stupor—but safe. It was aroused, at length, by Ransom touching me upon the shoulder.

"Come on, matie," he said. "Let us seek some sort of shelter while there is yet time."

We began staggering forward toward the black cliffs. Suddenly Ransom paused and looked back.

"Case," he mused, "I mustn't leave it out there."

"It's too big for us to move," I answered.

"Then we must open it, take out the goods, and break up the case."

"What are we to do?" I queried. "It is solidly put together—water-tight, even. How are we to open it?"

He looked around him upon the sand. "This is how!" he exclaimed, and picked up a large, flat stone. "We can pry off the lid with these."

He started back toward the case, with the primitive utensils, but I stopped him by saying:

"First, let's find our shelter yonder in the cliffs, we'll come back later for the box. Then, in case we're attacked while at work on it, we'll know which way to run."

He saw the wisdom of my suggestion, and we started at once for the towering cliffs.

As we drew nearer their rough, jagged aspect became more apparent. Up there, not only we had reason to might hold off a horde. We followed a narrow, zigzag trail up between the towering bowlders—steep, slippery and doubtless but seldom used, judging from the accumulation of debris of decayed vegetation underneath thru which we made our way.

There were a number of cavernous openings in the face of the mountain wall, which, while damp and small, brought us to the brink of a fissure further up we might find a cavern adapted to our particular needs. From this we were compelled to retreat, after entering a narrow cleft-like opening in the wall, we found ourselves in a passage which widened into a fair-sized chamber. A rift of light from some fissure above let in light sufficiently for us to continue our explorations without stopping to make torches. The cave was dry, the air pure and cool, and from some point in the chamber farther in we heard the tinkle of falling water.

The place, for comfort, and with a strong fortress, possible heavy odds, was all, seemingly, that we could desire. Ransom was enthusiastic.

"Some nifty, unfurnished apartments," he commented, glancing around him. "Marble pillars in the reception-hall. Running water in the bathroom—"

He was cut short by a crash and roar from the black interior beyond us, deafening, terrifying! We seemed to be clutched and made helpless by some mighty, invisible force engulfing us from the darkness of that inner cavern.

A horrid din and pandemonium arose; screams and shrieks of a host of unfriendly beasts bearing down upon us from that inner tomb rang in our ears; ghastly sounds, and ever nearer and nearer.

We stood gazing at each other with terror-stricken eyes; stood there as the paralyzed by fright and a consuming fear of we knew not what! Then, instinctively, we both reached for our weapons. Futile effort! Our guns were aboard the ship. We took a few faltering steps forward, until, of a sudden, we were flung prostrate upon the cold floor of the cavern.

CHAPTER IX.

THE air, a moment before so cool and pleasant, now seemed hot and suffocating. The violent lateral movement of the rock floor beneath us, however, had ceased abruptly. We arose to our feet, dazed, but wholly unhurt. Ransom looked over at me and grinned amiably.

"I thought at first," he began cheerily, "that the Zanorans were upon us; I'm glad to find it was only an earthquake."

"Oh, merely that!" I answered, with an attempt at sarcasm quite lost upon my companion.

"Yes," he resumed, "this whole island is of volcanic origin. I've heard, too, that somewhere near that temple of Khan we're out to find, there is still a sort of crater more or less active. But earthquakes are rare here, at that; never heard of but one ever taking place in Zanora before; we got here just in time, I reckon, to get in on it."

"Then there was one here before—when?"

"Ten years ago—if I remember."

"Were the natives much alarmed?"

"Yes, scared stiff! And they took most terrible measures doing what they s'posed would prevent the quake coming again. Now, I reckon, they'll do the same dev'lry as before, to ward off the trembling of their island for another ten years."

"What measures, Ransom," I queried, "did they take before?"

He studied me, then changed his mind abruptly.

"I'll relate all that to you another time, matie," he answered. "Let's be getting out of here now. This air is choking me. Besides, we got to unpack that case of ours and get busy before those Zan comes snooping around down there on the beach."

We made our way out to the entrance. Coming as we did from the gloom of the cavern, the outside world now seemed like a veritable paradise to us. In fact, tempted to wander from the path leading down to the ocean, and to ascend a high precipitous cliff. Here, like concealed ourselves, we could get a fine view of our surroundings.

Our ship, the good lady Holden, was no longer riding at anchor; we could barely make out her hull on the distant horizon. Would she come again, or perhaps send some other ship to aid us stranded there upon Zanora? Who could tell?

If, within the cavern, the forces of Nature were in tumult and transport, convulsions, not so without. Here she presented a serene and smiling face. Little evidence, in fact, of storm contained; a transformation one could scarcely believe possible in so short a time. Indeed, was not the earthquake a peculiar effect upon the recently raging waves.

It was morning in the Southern Sea. A sky of turquoise blue, thru which the sun—a great ball of gold—mounted higher and higher, with little effort to stem, unruffled as some immense, stupendous field of verdure, flecked only here and there with the white crests of mountains, fields and limpid streams; with the rippling surf breaking gently upon her strand, whispering low sounds —the secrets of the mighty deep. How could an isle be so beauteous and yet so cruel!

"Ransom," I said, "with such a scene before him a man is perforce given over to gazing, to look! Ransom—"

"Yes," he answered, "I was just thinking my stomach must have an idea my throat's been cut! When do we eat?"

"When we open that case—perhaps; of a certainty not before."

Spurred on by this incentive, my companion hurried on down the trail to the beach, while I followed closely behind him. The latter, in order to examine the case in closer to shore; it rested now with one corner buried in the shifting white sand. We were too heavy for us to lift outright; with some effort, however, we succeeded in bringing it end over end to the point for which we made. Then, with these to pry off the cover.

First, there were bolts of silks, of many shades and patterns, and of finest quality. I was deeply disappointed that so much space was given over to this commodity, and so expressed myself; Ransom, however, took a different view of the matter. He held forth a shimmering bolt of blue silk at arm's length, admiring the glistening sheen.

"Harold," he said, "there's class to this. Why, man, who else on the whole island of Zanora has got any such silk as we have?"

It couldn't just figure how, at the present moment, we were particularly in need of silk ourselves, either blue or otherwise; I would cheerfully have traded seven bolts of silk for a club sandwich. We delved deeper within the box.

Next we came to a finer sack. This we knew contained records most welcome acquisition. Below the rice were numerous bundles and packages, containing, for the most part, fireworks of every known variety and description. It seemed to me these latter would be even less use to us than the bolts of silk; but one cannot always judge correctly about such things. We carried the goods all up to our cavern above, even knocking the case to pieces, and taking with us the boards and every evidence we could of our being ashore, so that the Zanoras would not become aware of our presence, and begin a search for us at least, until such time as we would be ready to give them a fitting reception.

We took into the cave, too, the green boughs of a certain kind of tree growing near by—a fragrant variety of balsam, our bed-fellows for the night. And we carried in, as well, great quantities of dry wood for a fire, which we determined to set well within the cave, so the smoke might eventually betray us. Then we separated, and went out upon the beach to see what edible fare the island might afford at no great distance from our cave. I secured fresh dates, by no means a delicacy, and a sort of coarse-grained vegetable resembling a turnip. Ransom's search was along different and more profitable lines, varying variety to our first menu; for he returned from a little sheltered cove with a supply of fish, two lobsters, a dozen crabs, and a dozen or so razor-neck clams.

We built a small fire well within our cavern, and baked a portion of our seafood and the vegetable. Then, even without drink, without even a cup for our berries, without most of the so-called necessities, we partook of a repast than which I never expect nor hope to taste better; for we had with us the appetites of Arabs, the digestion of seamen, and we made that baked dinner look sick!

Now, at last, since leaving Hong-Kong Roads, we had experienced a variety of luck, both good and bad; but I think at one time did "seem" as if fortune was so truly smiling upon us as just now when Ransom felt in a rear pocket and found there a few crumbs of smoking tobacco in an oilskin pouch; this was a treasure find. We each had plenty of matches—water-tight, metal cases, and there was an abundance of paper wrapped about our many parcels. This we like the "makings" we lost no time in lighting up.

We went to the entrance, and sat down to enjoy a quiet smoke after our hard work and repast. Suddenly Ransom jumped to his feet.

"Look there!" he exclaimed excitedly.

I arose hurriedly and stood beside him, gazing in the direction to which he pointed. The boat I beheld filled me with alarm and dismay—a dozen or more great, brawny, hideously painted savages, armed with clubs, bows and arrows and heavy lances; our first—but by no means last—glimpse of the dread Zanorans!

CHAPTER X.

THEY were down upon the strand, near the spot where we had been washed ashore, before we had entirely got up about something, too, and ran about this way and that, with heads held close to the sand as a pack of hounds might do, striving to pick up a scent.

They had found our footprints. Fortunately for us, however, these telltale signs in the sand led not all the way from our cavern and the shore. We had crossed and recrossed so many times that the savages, clearly at a loss which way to look for us. Finally they stopped running about, and gathered in a circle for a short time in close discussion. They gesticulated wildly, shaking their long bows in the air, screaming forth their varied opinions of what had taken place there upon their shore; likewise, how, when and why!

They couldn't, apparently, agree upon any one thing. As at most such gatherings, each particular one imagined that his own opinion and belief was the only one worthy of serious belief and consideration; they were up in the air decidedly.

Of a sudden the gabfest ceased. With one accord, helter-skelter, off went the Zanoras, ticketty-split down the trail Ransom had made in going to the cove after oysters. It was certainly comical to watch them. My companion rolled another cigarette reflectively.

"Harold," he began, "did I ever tell you about a dog I once owned named 'Bulger'"

"You never did, Ransom," I answered. "Well, this dog I speak of," he went on, "wasn't much to look at, but he always got in bad somehow. He was a great dog to raise around—to hunt up scents. He could pick up a trail, too, Bulger could; but he always got started off on the back trail! What I mean is, he'd run his foot self to death goin' in the opposite direction from what the rabbit, say, had taken. Now, it looks to me like these much-touted Zanoras are a whole lot like my old dog Bulger. The whole bunch of 'em."

He spoke too soon; for at that moment one of the warriors—the biggest, meanest, most unprepossessing one in the whole outfit—swerved off at a tangent from the balance of the galloping fiendsmen, and came straight up the incline toward our cavern!

Oh, but he was a scary-looking mortal! His hideous face was streaked with carmine and ochre; and he was a giant, with big, bulging muscles standing out on his black, glistening body; his arms were long and hairy, like those of a gorilla. He was just naturally mean all over; a bad man to tackle. He became nearer at each succeeding yard from where we stood concealed, then stopped. Not that he had given up the notion of ascending the cliff, but rather because he felt, apparently, that it would only be the part of good judgment to advance from that point with all caution possible.

He stood forth upon a little ledge, out of view now from his companions below, and evidently at a loss just what to do. He seemed, as he stood there, a statuesque figure of ebony statue, every sense alive and alert; a striking pose, but terrible to contemplate.

"Ransom," I whispered, "we've got to capture that buckoo!"

He made no answer.

"Don't you think so?" I persisted.

"I hadn't thought so," he replied solemnly.

"Well, we have. We must make him captive—hold him as a hostage. He is a warrior of importance without doubt. If we can get him in our power it may be to our advantage in case things don't work just as we plan to get off Zanora."

"How'll we get him?" Ransom whispered, peeking cautiously around the corner of the cavern's mouth at the giant savage.

"I'll get in behind him if I can," I answered softly. "If I can get close enough to him I'll spring on him; then you kick in as quick as you can. You will have me and the savage to make him suspicious, or alarm him."

I dropped to the rocky trail at our feet, and, keeping my head low and well hidden from the watchful Zan by intercepting rocks, I began worming my way slowly and with a circuitous route to get in upon him from behind.

When at length I paused, and raised my head cautiously to get a view of my enemy, I found that the big warrior had not remained stationary, but was even now approaching the cave. Forward up the steep pathway, heading directly for the place where Ransom was hidden! Had he suspected, he had brought him much closer to myself, as well; and I confess that thus finding myself in such close proximity to this hideously painted Zan sent a cold chill down my spine. At a distance he had appeared formidable now, at close quarters, he was enough to strike fear and terror to the stoutest heart.

Closer, closer he approached to the ridge behind which I lay crouched; but he gave no sign that he suspected his thought and intent seemed wholly set on reaching the entrance of the cavern. Now, I made up myself for a supreme effort, I made ready to spring out upon him; tho, in truth, it seemed almost madness to attempt to grapple with him, for in the short time it would take my companion to come to my aid. And then—at this supreme and psychic moment—Ransom sneezed!

It was no timid, shrinking, self-effacing sneeze by any means, but a loud, bugle-effect effort which caused the Zan warrior first to stop short in amazement, then to turn and scamper back down the trail as fast as his twinkling legs could carry him, scared half out of his wits!

It was a headlong, precipitous retreat —a riotous rout of the enemy! Still, the way seemed at the moment to be set, at the ridiculous race he ran, we rejoiced not too greatly. For we knew that, sure as could be, this same soulless Zanora warrior, before long, would be coming up the incline again; and at this next time, fully nine-tenths of the middened, indignant population of the island would be trooping at his heels.

Already business was picking up upon

Zanora; times were likely soon to be a pleasant one; I did not dwell upon it.

The chamber ahead of us narrowed abruptly, separating into a number of widely diverging tunnels. All hope of building another barricade, then, to protect us from an enemy approaching our cavern from this direction, had to be abandoned. Our hope lay in the mere chance that the Zanora were unacquainted with the nature of these numberless subterranean tunnels and find one whereby they could reach us, even provided an outside opening existed, a point regarding which we were as yet by no means certain.

We turned then, and began retracing our steps, when suddenly Ransom stopped; the light from his torch had reflected a tiny stream of water trickling down from the rugged face of the wall at our right. We went over to it, hoping almost against hope. We scooped some up in our hands and tasted. It was pure and sweet! Then we drank our fill. Grateful and refreshed, buoyed up with renewed courage by the assured betterment of our conditions, we returned to our own cavern.

Here we built up the fire, ate a light repast, lit cigarettes, and then stretched out upon the balsam boughs in the fireplace's warm, ruddy glare. In a few moments Ransom was sound asleep.

Good, faithful old Ransom! As I watched the play of light upon his peaceful face, I felt a twinge of conscience. I had sought him out from a comfortable berth; I had brought him into a place where danger threatened on every side. Into all this had lured him by means of a mythical person, the beautiful, hazel-eyed Princess of Mandalore! Yes, there was another thing. Sealed up in we were in this cavern, with the Zanoras fully aware of our being there, how were we to hunt up the temple of Khan, for those side caverns, and investigate that smell of gas we detected there.

We reached the chain of small caverns, then separated, each with a torch, to expedite the task of making there exploration. I came, at length, to a small cavern in which the odor of gas was exceptionally strong; so much so, in fact, that I hesitated to enter with my torch. Instead, I broke off a piece of burning ember and threw it in. That was well that I used this caution; the little cave became instantly a roaring furnace of flame!

In a short time the accumulated supply of gas was consumed; the flame now was confined to a small recess in the floor from which the gas emerged steadily from below. The fire area, now, was about the size and shape of an inverted bushel basket, and threw off an intense heat. At that moment Ransom joined me; he was attracted at the result of my discovery.

"Fine business, Harold!" he exclaimed. "Your supply of fuel-service is inexhausted; this will provide warmth for comfort, heat for our cooking; and besides——"

He paused suddenly, and began searching all parts of the little cavern.

"Say, there's something funny about this, Harold!"

"What do you mean?"

"Well, now, listen. This gas has been flowing out this way for some time—for ages, perhaps."

"Well?"

"How, then, is it there was not an even greater accumulation of gas at the time you threw in the ember?"

"Why, some escaped out into the larger caverns; that's how we chanced to find it."

"I know," he resumed, "some gas escaped that way, but certainly not all of it; otherwise, the whole outer caverns would have been filled with it. Where, then, did the balance escape?"

"I'm sure I don't know."

"Then I'll tell you. There is an opening somewhere near here to the outside world!"

His words thrilled me; they offered hope, possible escape.

The top of the little cavern was domeshaped; we examined it carefully. At another moment the secret of the escaping gas was solved; the whole top of the cave, instead of being rock, was a tangled mass of brush and intervening pines!

We took out our knives, climbed up the ragged side of the cave, and, with considerable exertion, cut our way up thru, for the scorching flames had burned away considerable debris. A cool breeze fanned our faces—the sweet, salt breeze from the sea.

It was night. High above us the little silvery stars beamed down, twinkling as the extending to us poor cavedwellers a cheery welcome out into the great world again. A feeling of joyous exhilaration seized us; we crawled up higher into the tiny opening we had cut. Then, of a sudden, our hearts sank within us; our hope and joy had been snatched out in a breath. For there, extending in a great circle which doubtless encompassed the entire area of the caverns, was a double row of big campfires, before which stalked grim armed sentinels.

We were indeed prisoners; guarded zealously by night and by day by keen-eyed, merciless Zanoras, whom we were as powerless to combat as we soon would be that other still more relentlessly, cruelly pressing foe—starvation!

We crawled back into the gas chamber slowly, silently. For my part, I was sick and discouraged.

"Well, Ransom," I wheezed, "it's all over with you and me now! Oh, why did I ever——"

He turned upon me fiercely.

"You cuss that chatter!" he exclaimed. "This fight ain't over by long ways; it's just commenced!"

He began picking up smooth, round stones, and carrying them over to the leaping flame.

"What's that for?" I asked.

He chucked the stones, one by one, into the crevice which fed the flame.

"We'll put out this fire," he said, "so that the reflection will not be seen from outside." The flame area grew smaller and smaller, until it was a mere pyramid of leaping jets. "There, that's better," he commented. "Now, Harold, light the torches again; we'll explore further some of those little tunnels leading off from the far end of the big cavern."

I followed him without a word. If he had the spirit, the heart to go on striving against such odds as we were up against, the least I could do would be to remain silent, and not express the feeling of pessimistic despair which oppressed me.

We entered the low, narrow tunnel, Ransom first and I a few feet behind. On, on we pressed, in absolute silence, save for the sound of our own footfalls.

Suddenly Ransom turned back toward me, and whispered hoarsely: "Put out your torch, Harold. Be quick!"

We went on slowly in the darkness; then, as we rounded an angle, a great blaze of light shone before us!

Ransom waited for me to catch up with him; he was all aquiver with excitement. He could only say in a flutter:

"The temple of Khan!" he exclaimed.

This capital story will be continued in the next Book Leaflet. Those sharing the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber to this paper, it will repay you to send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00, and you will not regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

MY SON

By Ada Tyrrell

Here is his little cambric frock
That I laid in lavender so sweet,
And here his tiny shoe and sock
I made with loving care for his dear feet.

I fold the frock across my breast,
And in imagination, ah, my sweet,
Once more I hush my babe to rest,
And once again I warm those little feet.

Where do those strong young feet now stand?
In flooded trench, half numb to cold or pain,
Or marching thru the desert land
To some dread place that they may never gain.

I ask no honors on the field,
That other men have won as brave as he—
I only pray that God may shield
My son, and bring him safely back to me!

Men and Matters.

In Holland every adult citizen is liable to service in the army and navy from the age of 19 to 40.

Higgs-coke potash is now worth about $500 a ton. Before the war it could be bought for $35.

Nearly 2,000,000 cords of wood are used in the manufacture of paper in this country every year.

Monaco possesses the smallest army in the world, consisting of seventy-five guards, seventy-five gendarmes and twenty-five firemen.

Amsterdam is to have a floating theater which will accommodate 2,000 people and have a restaurant and cafe.

Edward F. Holsteary, Philadelphia's greatest banker, was once an office boy at a salary of $16 a month.

Reports of the census enumerators in Kansas show that in that State there are 845,679 males and 813,281 females.

Charles M. Schwab, the steel magnate, has donated $100,000 for the erection of a concert hall in Bethlehem, Pa.

Brigadier General Horatio G. Gibson of the United States Army is the oldest living graduate of West Point Military College.

Rear Admiral Troubridge is probably the greatest linguist in the British navy, as he speaks French, Italian, Japanese and German fluently.

* * *

Snowbank Mosquitoes.

In both the Rocky Mountains and Alaska the geologists and engineers of the United States geological survey have a part of their regular equipment mosquito nets for their heads. Even when working in deep snow, head nets and gauntlets are necessary to protect the field men from the bloodthirstiness of the pests. Insects do not thrive in cold with increasing altitude. At 11,000 feet, or timberline, he is as prolific as at sea level, and above that he is even more so and pungent it may be, will not eradicate him. The only sure relief lies in the net. In many parts of Colorado the mountain natives let mosquitoes bite them until their systems become thoroly inoculated and their poisons harmless, Science. After this they are bothered no more. The first advice given to the tenderfoot by the old-timer is: "Let 'em bite; they won't keep it up long."

* * *

Activities of Women.

Nearly all the theaters in England now employ women as stage hands.

Nearly all the industrial work in France is now being done by women.

Women have been nurses and midwives since early times. In 1861 there were twenty-nine training schools for nurses.

A woman traveling in Brazil sent cuttings to the United States from which the orange growing industry was developed.

Women have eight-hour work days in five of the eleven suffrage States—Washington, California, Arizona, Colorado and Wyoming.

Mme. Cheruit, one of the leading dressmakers of Paris, has been honored with the Legion of Honor medal by the French Government.

"Oh, no, not so bad," I answered. "But—it's salty."

"Yes, I noticed that."

"Well, then——"

"We needed salt, didn't we?"

"For our cooking, yes; but we had plenty of salt when we didn't we?"

"Where?"

"Why, a whole ocean of it!"

He looked at me with a whimsical smile.

"You forget already, Harold," he responded, "that when we sealed up that doorway we became prisoners, so to speak. True, the ocean is out there in the same old place; our surroundings, also, have changed. We can no longer emerge to go to the ocean, or anywhere else, just at present."

His words awoke in me a sense of our condition which I think I had not fully comprehended.

Prisoners! Yes, that was the only way to consider our present position. If we ventured outside now, we would be filled as full of arrows as a hedgehog is of quills! Truly we were "bottled" and to fight it the start, for. I shook off the feeling of despair, however, that was surely creeping over me; I turned to my companion with a confidence I was far from feeling.

"You're right, Ransom," I said. "We have plenty of this salt water; but we must have fresh water, too. Come along; we'll find it."

"That's the way to talk, son," he answered cheerily. "We're into this thing up to our necks; it's up to us to get safely out again."

We picked up the torches again, and pressed on.

Now the chamber widened materially from side to side; or rather, we noted, tapered passages running parallel with the one we traversed.

"We must explore these side-door entrances, Harold," observed Ransom, "some time when we have a chance. Do you notice any odor coming from them?"

I sniffed the air diligently.

"Yes," I answered, "I believe I do."

"Of what?"

"Gas."

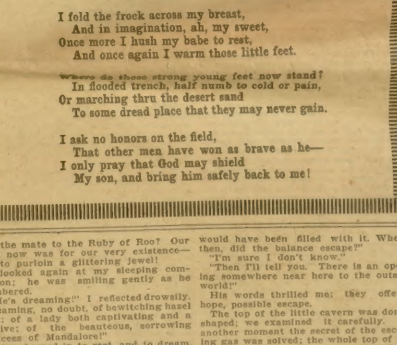
"That's what I'd call it—natural gas. We'll investigate this further some time. Pretty soft if we could use this gas to cook with."

"We'll go all thru them tomorrow," I answered. "We may even find some passage leading up again to the outside world."

He turned to me with a smile.

"There you go again!" he exclaimed, "How are we to know when 'tomorrow comes?"

Ransom had no watch; my own had stopped when I dipped in the sea. He was right; ours, for the present at least, was a world of night. The thought was not



and the mate to the Ruby of Roo? Our fight now was for quite a different jewel—not to purloin a glittering jewel!

I looked again at my sleeping companion. He was smiling gently as he slumbered.

"He's dreaming!" I reflected drowsily. "Dreaming, no doubt, of bewitching hazel eyes; of a lady both captivating and a captive; of the beauteous, sorrowing Princess of Mandalore!"

I, too, turned in to rest, and to dream, I hoped, of one who was no mere phantom, but who existed in the real of life, de Martella, whose thoughts I knew, whether waking or sleeping, were of me alone.

Were the chances of my ever seeing again, face to face, my dream-lady as remote as were his own?

CHAPTER XII.

WHEN we awoke the fire was out. The embers were entirely consumed, and what little ashes remained were quite cold; so our slumber must have been one of complete exhaustion. Whether it was morning, noon, or night, we had not the slightest conception. We went back to the little spring we had found bubbling out from the face of the wall, and washed; then we relighted the fire and prepared food.

"Well, Harold," remarked Ransom, as we ate, "we had better start again at once our explorations and preparations for defense against attack, shall we not?"

He saw from my countenance that I did not accept the suggestion with alacrity.

"You know, Harold," he continued, "preparation, in our case, is like making love to a widow—it can't be overdone!"

I went over and secured the torches. "All right, then," I said, "let's start out

would have been filled with it. Where, then, did the balance escape?"

"I'm sure I don't know."

"Then I'll tell you. There is an opening somewhere near here to the outside world!"

His words thrilled me; they offered hope, possible escape.

The top of the little cavern was dome-shaped; we examined it carefully. At another moment the secret of the escaping gas was solved; the whole top of the cave, instead of being rock, was a tangled mass of brush and intervening pines!

We took out our knives, climbed up the ragged side of the cave, and, with considerable exertion, cut our way up thru, for the scorching flames had burned away considerable debris. A cool breeze fanned our faces—the sweet, salt breeze from the sea.

It was night. High above us the little silvery stars beamed down, twinkling as the extending to us poor cave-dwellers a cheery welcome out into the great world again. A feeling of joyous exhilaration seized us; we crawled up higher into the tiny opening we had cut. Then, of a sudden, our hearts sank within us; our hope and joy had been snatched out in a breath. For there, extending in a great circle which doubtless encompassed the entire area of the caverns, was a double row of big campfires, before which stalked grim armed sentinels.

We were indeed prisoners; guarded zealously by night and by day by keen-eyed, merciless Zanoras, whom we were as powerless to combat as we soon would be that other still more relentlessly, cruelly pressing foe—starvation!

We crawled back into the gas chamber slowly, silently. For my part, I was sick and discouraged.

"Well, Ransom," I wheezed, "it's all over with you and me now! Oh, why did I ever——"

He turned upon me fiercely.

"You cuss that chatter!" he exclaimed. "This fight ain't over by long ways; it's just commenced!"

He began picking up smooth, round stones, and carrying them over to the leaping flame.

"What's that for?" I asked.

He chucked the stones, one by one, into the crevice which fed the flame.

"We'll put out this fire," he said, "so that the reflection will not be seen from outside." The flame area grew smaller and smaller, until it was a mere pyramid of leaping jets. "There, that's better," he commented. "Now, Harold, light the torches again; we'll explore further some of those little tunnels leading off from the far end of the big cavern."

I followed him without a word. If he had the spirit, the heart to go on striving against such odds as we were up against, the least I could do would be to remain silent, and not express the feeling of pessimistic despair which oppressed me.

We entered the low, narrow tunnel, Ransom first and I a few feet behind. On, on we pressed, in absolute silence, save for the sound of our own footfalls.

Suddenly Ransom turned back toward me, and whispered hoarsely: "Put out your torch, Harold. Be quick!"

We went on slowly in the darkness; then, as we rounded an angle, a great blaze of light shone before us!

Ransom waited for me to catch up with him; he was all aquiver with excitement. He could only say in a flutter:

"The temple of Khan!" he exclaimed.

This capital story will be continued in the next Book Leaflet. Those sharing the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber to this paper, it will repay you to send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00, and you will not regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

Men and Matters.

In Holland every adult citizen is liable to service in the army and navy from the age of 19 to 40.

Higgs-coke potash is now worth about $500 a ton. Before the war it could be bought for $35.

Nearly 2,000,000 cords of wood are used in the manufacture of paper in this country every year.

Monaco possesses the smallest army in the world, consisting of seventy-five guards, seventy-five gendarmes and twenty-five firemen.

Amsterdam is to have a floating theater which will accommodate 2,000 people and have a restaurant and cafe.

Edward F. Holsteary, Philadelphia's greatest banker, was once an office boy at a salary of $16 a month.

Reports of the census enumerators in Kansas show that in that State there are 845,679 males and 813,281 females.

Charles M. Schwab, the steel magnate, has donated $100,000 for the erection of a concert hall in Bethlehem, Pa.

Brigadier General Horatio G. Gibson of the United States Army is the oldest living graduate of West Point Military College.

Rear Admiral Troubridge is probably the greatest linguist in the British navy, as he speaks French, Italian, Japanese and German fluently.

* * *

Snowbank Mosquitoes.

In both the Rocky Mountains and Alaska the geologists and engineers of the United States geological survey have a part of their regular equipment mosquito nets for their heads. Even when working in deep snow, head nets and gauntlets are necessary to protect the field men from the bloodthirstiness of the pests. Insects do not thrive in cold with increasing altitude. At 11,000 feet, or timberline, he is as prolific as at sea level, and above that he is even more so and pungent it may be, will not eradicate him. The only sure relief lies in the net. In many parts of Colorado the mountain natives let mosquitoes bite them until their systems become thoroly inoculated and their poisons harmless, Science. After this they are bothered no more. The first advice given to the tenderfoot by the old-timer is: "Let 'em bite; they won't keep it up long."

* * *

Activities of Women.

Nearly all the theaters in England now employ women as stage hands.

Nearly all the industrial work in France is now being done by women.

Women have been nurses and midwives since early times. In 1861 there were twenty-nine training schools for nurses.

A woman traveling in Brazil sent cuttings to the United States from which the orange growing industry was developed.

Women have eight-hour work days in five of the eleven suffrage States—Washington, California, Arizona, Colorado and Wyoming.

Mme. Cheruit, one of the leading dressmakers of Paris, has been honored with the Legion of Honor medal by the French Government.

Keeneyes' Solution

-:- Or, -:-

The South Grove Mystery

By J. Breckenridge Ellis

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CHAPTER XIII

THE inquest was held as soon as practicable. At this inquest nothing was developed except the statements of Doctor Free.

At first, the physician declared without hesitation that the sheriff had come to death at his own hand. On minute cross-examination, he admitted the possibility of some one else's participation in the tragedy.

He said that if it could be assumed that the sheriff was standing still and without trying to ward off the shot, and without crying out for help, a man might have advanced the pistol close to his breast, fired the third shot —having twice fired without hitting the body—and had himself fired the fatal pistol in such a manner as if it might have dropped from the hand of a suicide.

But if the two shots which had struck the tree had failed to warn the sheriff of immediate danger, the preposterous supposition, seemingly—what must the sheriff have thought on seeing the murderer advance upon him with smoking weapon and deliberately place the muzzle almost against his vest? If too terrified to cry for help, he could not at least tried to ward off the blow?

On the contrary, it was as certain as anything unwitnessed could be certain, that he must have heard those two shots which must have been aimed at him, and which missed him and struck the tree. Then the third shot was fired. All this time, why had he stood there with bated breath? Could any rational man believe him murdered rather than commit him of his own weapon?

Yet, rational people would believe so, for the jury returned the verdict, "Death from a pistol fired by a hand unknown."

It was held with the theory of suicide, that the sheriff might have been stupefied by seeing the murderer dash from the underbrush, advancing as he fired three shots in rapid succession. There would perhaps have been no chance to cry out. Or, the sheriff, for the care-free, jolly sheriff was so well known, and the absence of any motive for suicide was so clearly demonstrated, that the theory of suicide did not generally hold, in spite of the doctor's positive declarations.

As they left the room in which the inquest was held, Keeneyes found himself beside the coroner.

"Doctor Free," he said genially.

The other bowed stiffly. "I must hurry back to my office," was his response to the other's overture.

"I merely wanted to ask," said the detective, "why it is that you are so anxious to make people believe that the sheriff really committed suicide."

The physician flushed with anger. "You insult gentlemen. I think unconsciously," he remarked, restraining himself by a visible effort, "that you, not being a gentleman yourself, you cannot appreciate a gentleman's feelings."

"My dear doctor," replied Keeneyes, "you are as apt at diagnosing bad etiquette as you are bad health. But will you answer my question?"

"I will answer it. I wish people to believe Walsh committed suicide because that is the truth, and I would spare the people the expense and the folly of seeking a murderer who can exist only in their imagination."

And with a brusque bow, he left the detective standing in the middle of the street, while still standing there, as in an attitude of meditation, the deputy sheriff came near, and Keeneyes stopped him to say:

"You know the character of Walsh as well as any one—as well as his wife, I dare say, and might help me out a bit."

The deputy sheriff professed himself anxious to help in any way.

"Do you think Walsh committed suicide?" Keeneyes inquired. "Knowing him as you do—as a sort of boon companion? Now, the doctor argues that he did. He assumes—"

"I'm sure he did not kill himself," the other declared warmly.

"He assumes," the detective continued, as if the other had not spoken, "that if he did not commit suicide, he was either a coward or a fool. For reflect, my dear sir, if Walsh knew there was danger while the first two shots were fired, how can you account for his remaining in the same position while a murderer came up to him, placed his pistol almost against his breast, and shot him in the heart? If you say he was paralyzed with terror and couldn't move, you make him out a coward. If you say he had no breath left with which to cry out—still he is a coward. If you say he didn't try to defend his life because of any other reason, you make him out a fool. Isn't this so? Now, what I want to know is this: Did you ever know the sheriff to show any signs of cowardice?"

"He was a brave man," the other declared, adding, "but under certain circumstances, one never knows what one may do. A very brave man might be for a few seconds paralyzed, as you say, with terror."

"Let me detain you no longer," said the detective, with a slight bow, "for you have nothing to tell me." And he passed on.

In the meantime nothing had been learned concerning the vanished son of the dead sheriff. After the funeral a week passed without news—no clew to Tad or the two Turk, whom he had been employed to watch, and who, presumably, had turned upon him.

Nor did Mrs. Walsh recover consciousness. This, however, was not to be expected until after the operation, and the operation had been indefinitely put off the inability of the leading surgeon to come to Pamiston for three days later than the one first named, the wounded. This delay, it was held, would not result to the patient's disadvantage—would, on the contrary, be all the better.

Keeneyes, having set special agents to work to find Tad Walsh, and also had in Pamiston, feeling that something might happen there at any time regarding his prosecution, did not like to lose time in simply waiting for this intangible something to come to pass, he ventured his own mind, that he might get unexamined, who had been absent from town on the night of Pamiston's mystery—that is, had been absent unaccountably.

He reviewed the discoveries he had already made in regard to the other absentees.

There was the bachelor merchant, who had constantly gone to Kansas City to buy a stock of goods, but in reality to have his photograph taken for his sweetheart—and his sweetheart had miraculously vanished from the restaurant at which she and the mercer dined. Plim, had been visiting. The woman had accepted an invitation to a house party in Chicago for one week from the day of the shooting tragedy—but that day had come and passed, and the heart-broken mercer could find no trace of his missing sweetheart—her name was never mentioned between them —and no one, no, her family had made every conceivable effort to find her—and all in vain; she was as mysteriously lost to the world as if snatched from public ken as Tad Walsh. So much for the case of Mr. Plim.

As for Tad Walsh and his wife, the detective knew only that they had been some place they were firmly resolved not to make known, and from this refusal to tell him. Also, it was Doctor Free who had last seen Tad going in the direction of the railroad track—was Doctor Free who had argued so determinedly that Tad's father must have committed suicide—and apparently with very good reason. So much for Doctor Free and his wife.

As to Tad's negro who had shown a remarkable knowledge of what had actually happened at South Grove, and who had stubbornly refused to tell this falsehood, he seemed by far the most important of the five absentees—but unfortunately every effort to find him and Tad was thus far thrown away. Once again in his power, Keeneyes smiled grimly to think of how he would force the negro to speak out.

Of the five, there remained only Mrs. Hannah Dubois, who had not been seen, not seen. He had not seen her because all this time she had been away from Pamiston.

As Mrs. Hannah Dubois' character was exceedingly doubtful and discreditable, her absence had caused little remark, and it would have been strange to nobody, if it had not been at this critical time; and even as it was, it excited no interest in anybody but the detective. He realized that she promised very little in the way of elucidating the South Grove affair—still, not the slightest clew must be passed by.

Accordingly, in the very hour that his landlord informed him that the woman was once more in town, he hastened to pay her a visit, presumably safeguarded by his long experience of the underworld, and his official character and the open, even ostentatious show he made of going in broad daylight—safeguarded thus from the devices and charms of this person who belonged by birth but no longer by association to one of the most respected families of Pamiston County.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE home of Mrs. Dubois was a small cottage set back in a wide lawn, and flanked on either side by large residences—that is, large for the village of Pamiston.

These residences on the right and on the left of the "Dubois place," as the small cottage with its shaded yard was called, were in one instance unoccupied, and, in the other, occupied by a very poor family unable to pay more than a nominal rent. The reason that the big house on the right was vacant, and the reason that the big house on the left was tenanted by a ragged and rather grimy family were one and the same—the reputation of Mrs. Dubois place had driven away close neighbors.

Not that there was anything obviously wrong about Mrs. Dubois' place, for that anything took place there, so far as was seen or heard, that one need be ashamed to look upon, was not Mrs. Dubois herself had led and was leading a life so unexplained and unrelated to respectable conventions that people looked on her cottage with superstitious dread, as the abode of a sort of social ogre.

When Keeneyes knocked upon her door, and she opened it in person, he was struck with the thought that rumor about Mrs. Dubois, and he was not surprised to find the ogre an extremely pretty and well preserved lady of middle age still to charm. She looked at the detective closely and saw that he was a stranger, and her countenance was serene.

"I am Mr. Zellers," he said at once, "and I believe I speak to Mrs. Dubois. I have come to you as a detective, in the course of my investigation of the South Grove mystery, and I—hope—for your interview with you."

"That was a terrible affair, it would seem," murmured the lady, in a clear, musical voice. "I grant you the interview with pleasure, and I hope your profession will be a shield between you and any ill-natured remarks that might be made because of your visit. You are doubtless aware that I have what we may call a 'reputation.'"

Mr. Zellers was unobservious to ill-natured remarks," he assured her with a smile, as he followed her into a well-appointed but extremely small front room.

She sat down with easy grace, and he seated himself in a chair close to the light.

"You are a member, I am told," he observed, "of the distinguished Carleton family, which has been represented in Congress and which also takes so many prizes at the cattle shows."

"Yes," she replied placidly. "I have blood and money and beauty. I live quite alone here, since none of my connections would put a foot across my doorstep for worlds. But I enjoy my novels and my music. Also, I travel a good deal, and I am not seriously unhappy with very good reason. So much for Doctor Free and his wife.

As to Tad's negro who had shown a remarkable knowledge of what had actually happened at South Grove, and who had stubbornly refused to tell this falsehood, he seemed by far the most important of the five absentees—but unfortunately every effort to find him and Tad was thus far thrown away. Once again in his power, Keeneyes smiled grimly to think of how he would force the negro to speak out.

Of the five, there remained only

been that woman. What should you have done?"

"That must of course have depended upon circumstances. Had it been possible to convince the man that I had always been true to him—however false I might have been—I should certainly have made the effort, unless he were interested in another woman. In the latter case I should have made him believe that I did not really care for him—tho I might have stabbed him to the heart on being set free. I believe in either case I should have succeeded, for I can always make a lie appear more plausible than bare truth. Men are repelled by bare truth; they want a nice dressing served with their facts, when the facts come from women."

Keeneyes smiled indulgently, and asked his next question in the same casual, politely regulated tone he had used from the beginning, as if it were only another general inquiry:

"In your opinion, who were the man and woman who played their mysterious and sinister parts at South Grove, that fatal Thursday night?"

She looked into his eyes and smiled back, and answered just as lightly, just as composedly as she had spoken from the beginning: "The sheriff and his wife."

CHAPTER XV.

MRS. DUBOIS had made an exceedingly startling answer to the detective's blunt question. Her manner, however, remained as casual as before—as if the dreadful suspicion she had cast upon the sheriff and his wife was to her of but the faintest interest.

If the detective was astonished, he made no sign to indicate it. He looked at Mrs. Dubois pleasantly, but not searchingly.

"Do I understand you to mean," he asked quietly, "that you actually believe it to have been Mr. and Mrs. Walsh in the South Grove house Thursday night of the bonfire, or do you merely mean to say that possibly they were the two involved?"

"No, no," returned Mrs. Dubois, pleasantly, "I really believe it was Mr. Walsh who built the bonfire, and that he really intended to burn his wife to death. And since you receive my statement so calmly, Mr. Zellers, might I venture to say that the idea must already have occurred to you."

"Mrs. Dubois," said Keeneyes, frankly, "of course I had thought of it. How could I help thinking of it after what happened later on? But I did not expect the same suspicion—or rather, the same idea—to occur to you."

"Why do you say it is an idea with you rather than a suspicion?" she returned quickly, "unless you think that I have just said: 'is it not so?'"

"Whether it is or it is not so, I shall not say," he declared, "but I am contrary to all my experience to express any suspicion I might feel until I hold the proofs. But I now ask you, what was the sheriff, why did he intend to murder his wife in that horrible manner? And if it was the sheriff, why did he find him and his wife, afterwards, living together so peaceably?"

"You must not ask me for proofs," returned the other. "Remember, I can only tell you what is in my mind."

"Of course—certainly—your words bind you to nothing."

"On that understanding, I will try to explain. We have in the first place, the evidence that a man meant to burn a woman at the stake—a tiger arrived on the scene, then, or afterwards. Was ever so remarkable a thing known of in Pamiston or Pamiston County? Or in the entire State? So far as that is concerned, I doubt if all the United States could present a parallel case. And after the passing of a few days, during which nothing is discovered, who are suddenly struck down?"

"The sheriff's wife," said Keeneyes, nodding, "and later the sheriff."

"Yes. So it seems to follow naturally that they were connected with the first scene. One marvel in Pamiston is surely enough for Pamiston. Other wonders must be the results evolved from the Wonder Number One. And this is why I think that the sheriff and his wife were the actors in the beginning. I believe the sheriff struck down his wife—he had failed to burn the stake, and when he beats her upon the head. And I believe the sheriff killed himself. He had relented somewhat about burning his wife. Why should not remorse at having injured her skull now cause him to commit suicide?"

"And you think that he agreed for his son to watch Tuck because—"

"Yes, in order to have his son out of the way that he might make away with Mrs. Walsh."

"You have no proof of all this?"

"Absolutely none. I merely state my opinion."

"Good. And in your opinion, why should Mr. Walsh have wished to destroy his wife?"

"That I have already stated: Either he had fallen in love with another woman, or he believed she had fallen in love with another man."

"And of these two cases which seems the more natural?"

She shrugged. "I always blame the woman. I have nothing more to say on that head, because I haven't troubled myself to think in favor of curing Mrs. Walsh was to blame in some way—men do not kill women for pleasure. And if he committed suicide from a weak, wrong conscience, it shows how very deeply in the wrong she must have been to provoke him to such a deed."

After a brief silence, during which Keeneyes seemed to be musing on what she had said, he, by quality was preparing his next method of attack, he suddenly opened his gray eyes a little wider than before, and asked in a slightly different accent, as if to show that he had come to a new subject:

"Mrs. Dubois, you said in town on the Thursday night we have been discussing." He asked with sudden abruptness: "Where were you?"

"I think I said, in explaining my personal habits to you," she responded, with a sleepy laugh, "that I was a traveler. I was away on one of my journeys at the time to which you refer."

"Where?" asked Keeneyes.

She hesitated for an instant.

Then with quiet self-command, she said, "Mr. Zellers, we have passed so agreeable an hour on our present footing that I would prefer to step from our status in the conventional bounds of polite people. My life has been rather the life of a bohemian, those bohemians of that Latin Quarter in the East set like hot cakes. Should we run on serials—rather, I should say, like those girls of fiction that like the well-behaved young men to find out and ask, you. I think perhaps you would do well not to ask me where I have been or what I have been doing. You will certainly help to reduce our conversation to a lower key, and even then you would not know whether or not I was telling you the truth. I can speak in the most open manner of things that my respected relations would not admit existed. Now, do not ask you to excuse me because you could not sympathize with my view of morals, nor appreciate my frank command of unusual language."

"I quite understand," said the detective, rising and bowing, "I will bid you good-by on the same high key we struck at the beginning."

With another bow, he left the house, thinking with discontent: "If I knew what that woman knows, the Pamiston mystery would be solved to its least detail."

CHAPTER XVI.

AFTER leaving the questionable abode of Mrs. Hannah Dubois, the detective went to his hotel to learn if any news had come during his absence concerning the vanishing of the sheriff; but nothing had been heard of Tad Walsh or the Walsh farmhouse, and nothing had been heard—so he was informed over the telephone by Mr. Samson Plimm—from Plimm's store-keeper, who had so mysteriously slipped away from the restaurant in Kansas City while Keeneyes was at dinner.

"Mr. Plimm," called the detective, not troubling himself to speak over the wire in a guarded manner, "I have in mind, just at this time, giving me the name of the lady——"

He heard the receiver at the other end of the wire hung up, which in itself was a very definite refusal to comply with his request.

Keeneyes accordingly set forth for the merchant's place of business. Samson Plimm met him at the counter with the very angry face, but because of the people passing in and out, and because of a clerk who was present, he dared not give vent to his indignation.

"May I see you in my private office?" he asked of the detective, his voice smothered almost to a whisper.

"I am very sorry," returned the detective, "but time will not permit me the delights of a tete-a-tete. I asked you a respectful question over the telephone, and had you cared to answer it——"

"Please come apart with me that all these people may not be disturbed with our affairs," the merchant flashed.

"No time, no time," Keeneyes returned briskly. "If our chat disturbs them, let them move on without listening. I merely want to know the name——"

"Mr. Zellers!"

"I see you know what I mean. Will you give me her name?"

Plimm spoke in a whisper: "You told me that you did not care to learn that name. You said you were investigating the South Grove outbreak. My private business was no business of yours. And you were absolutely right."

"My dear sir," Keeneyes returned pleasantly, "at that time I was not ready to hear the name——" He sank his voice to a whisper, for he was no more anxious than Plimm for others to hear the vital part of his message—"the name of your sweetheart. At the time of our former interview, a new name might have distracted my attention from the real task before me. But I am ready for your sweetheart's name now." He added in a louder voice:

"Are you ready to impart the information?"

"I had hoped," said Plimm, with dignity, "that you would not ask me this. I had hoped that even as an officer of the law would perceive the delicacy of the matter and abstain from inquiry."

"Your hopes are in vain. I ask you. I insist upon an answer."

"I cannot give the answer."

"Then—if I go with you to your private office?"

"No, not even there. I shall never betray that lady."

"But if she has mysteriously vanished—if you want her found—if she really is your sweetheart—when you refuse to give me this clew that I may find her?"

"I have no more to say," returned Plimm.

"I will not conceal from you," said the detective, "that your refusal is a very grave matter. I am obliged to expose to the public all I have found out about you and that lady and the photograph and watch."

"Do you tell it to the whole world, I'll never give the lady's name. I would die first." With which words he turned on his heel and left the detective standing on the sidewalk.

From this conversation, which to a listener might have seemed exceedingly unsatisfactory, Keeneyes derived the greatest satisfaction. It must have puzzled any one but himself to explain why.

CHAPTER XVII.

AFTER his conversation with the merchant, Keeneyes returned to his hotel and seated himself on the sidewalk before the entrance. He was sure that, in order to solve the South Grove mystery, he must wait until the recovery of Mrs. Walsh. Perhaps upon her sheriff's widow should not recover? In that case, the truth must if possible be forced from Mrs. Hannah Dubois. But how make Mrs. Dubois speak—how prove that she knew anything?

The evening mail came in at five o'clock. The detective was impatiently waiting when the postmaster and his clerk handed out the mail sacks.

In the mail was what the detective had longed for, and which he had scarcely dared hope for—an addressed letter to himself, evidently written in a boy's hand.

He took for granted that at last he had heard from Tad Walsh, and when he tore open the letter and rapidly read its startling contents, against the wall of the postoffice waiting-room, he found that his surmise was correct. The letter was from Tad, and bore that day's date. It had evidently been scrawled in a great hurry.

It read as follows:

"Dear Detective: Come quick. I've been on the job day and night, and I've got him fixed. The train will bring you to Toxville and you follow the north road seven miles and then is a big woods and you go to the woods and there is an old shack where they used to feed cattle and you go about two miles I guess from that old shack and pretty near southeast, and there is a tree with the bark off and my initials cut on the place and keep right on the same way to a dugout. You can be quick and bring something to eat.

"I am TAD W."

Not for a moment did Keeneyes doubt that the letter was genuine. "Tad W." or that "Tad W." was Tad Walsh, the sheriff's son. And not for a moment did he think of disregarding the injunctions of the letter. As to whether he could or could not find the dugout by the complicated directions, that was another matter, but the detective was decidedly hopeful.

Quick inquiries informed him that Toxville was fifty miles distant; that it consisted of a postoffice, a general store, a blacksmith shop, and only one residence—that of the station agent; also that the train leaving Pamiston at seven the next morning would be the first in that direction, and would reach Toxville about three leisurely hours out from Pamiston. This gave the detective a whole night to prepare for his adventure

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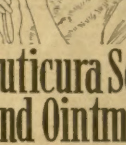

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—much to his discontent, for he would have liked to start that minute.

Because he was forced to wait, he presently began to consider if it might not be wise to take some one with him on the expedition, and the course of his reasoning brought him presently to the office door of Doctor Free. The physician greeted him with a particularly black look, and asked with exceeding gruffness why he had come to annoy him.

"Doctor Free," said Keeneye, easily, as he stood within the doorway, not having been invited to a seat, "you once remarked that I am an gentleman."

"You snapped the other belligerently.

"I wish to show you that at least I am a Christian. I shall show you that I forgive you."

"Oh!" snarled the physician. "What is it you forgive me? I don't want to be forgiven by you—nor insulted again. I ask you once more, what do you want?"

"Sir, this is unpleasant, but it is necessary. I want you to go with me in the morning on the seven o'clock local to Toxville."

"Very well," said Doctor Free, ironically. "Anything else?"

"That will develop when we reach Toxville."

"Yes, when we do reach Toxville, I imagine almost anything might develop!"

"You mean by that that you have no intention of complying with my invitation—or perhaps I should say my request. But I hope to be able to persuade you to go. You are aware that nothing so far has been heard of the missing son of the Walsh family. Well, I have just received a letter from him."

"What?" ejaculated the physician. "A letter from Tad? To you?"

"Just so!" He extended the letter. "Please read it."

When the physician with knitted brow had complied, the latter remarked: "You are the only one to whom I have shown that letter, and I must request you not to divulge its contents to any one that you might put some real criminal on his guard, or get Tad into terrible danger. And I trust you to remain discreet."

"I appreciate the importance of not revealing the contents of this letter," remarked the physician, thoughtfully. "But I cannot understand why you have shown it to me."

"I have done so as the quickest possible way of letting you see why I want you to go with me to Toxville. I want you to help me find the dugout in which Tad is hidden, and it has occurred to me that when we get there, medicine and may be needed either for Tad or for Tuck."

"I see. But I do not see why you select me. And I do not see how you can pretend to trust me, after our furious quarrel and after your insults."

"My dear doctor, there was no furious quarrel—that *is* all in your imagination. You fussed, but I did not, and it takes two to make a quarrel. And I forgot you because by my insults, as you call them—by my legitimate inquiries, as I call them—I convinced you that you had and your wife know nothing about the South Grove mystery."

Doctor Free looked at him keenly. "I cannot understand you."

"Few can. But will you go with me?"

"And lose a whole day's practice? I could not get back to Pamiston until tomorrow night."

"Couldn't your partner take care of your business for one day, in view of the seriousness of our expedition?"

"I suppose so—I suppose so," returned the other, impatiently. "But I tell you flatly I will not stir a foot with you unless I understand it, and that may I do at this moment."

"Very well, I will try to translate myself to your intelligence," said the detective, serenely. "I came to your office to ask you questions because you and your wife were unaccountably absent from Pamiston during the night of the big mystery, and during several days thereafter. You can see how naturally you and Mrs. Free fell under the classification of suspects. I wanted to know where you were and what you had been doing at the vital time, and I wanted to know if you and your wife had quarreled in order to decide if you and she were the chief actors in the near-tragedy. You would tell me very little, tho, without knowing it, you put me on the true scent, the you yourself are quite ignorant of the truth of the matter. After leaving you I made other inquiries in other quarters, and when at last I knew who were the real actors at South Grove——"

"You know that!" Doctor Free cried out in amazement.

"At least my suspicion is so strong that it practically amounts to knowledge. I say, when I found out what I needed to know, it left you and your wife, so far as I can see, altogether unconnected with the mystery. Therefore it is nothing to me where you were at the fatal time, or what you were doing, or whether or not your wife and you had quarreled. These things you refuse to tell; but these things have nothing to do with me. Therefore you can go with me to Toxville in the assurance that I shall ask you nothing."

After a brief silence, the physician said, "Yes, I understand. And you think you know who Tad is, and that tried to burn a woman at the stake?"

"I am quite sure you are not the man, and your wife is not the woman—so far and I may as well be on the most amicable terms."

"You would be willing to tell me whom you suspect—or know to be involved in the South Grove affair?"

"On the contrary, I should be quite unwilling."

"Yet you assert that I told you something that led to your important discovery?"

"True; but you did not know you were doing so. You did not understand what you told me was vitally important. It seemed to you of no moment, and I dare say at this moment you have not the slightest idea what I mean."

The physician nodded. He had no idea of the other's meaning. After another silence, he spoke with decision:

"Mr. Zellers—"

"Well?"

"I will be at the station in the morning to go with you to Toxville."

"Good! Then all I have to do now is to get some provisions to take with us. Good evening. By the way—don't be surprised if I fail to show up at the station in the morning, as I'll board the car down the line." And the detective hastened away.

His next care was to take his landlord aside and give him minute instructions to the effect that no one must know he had left Pamiston. To this the landlord agreed.

Keeneye next called upon Mrs. Free, who, since the very disagreeable interview, wished of all men to see him least. However, he was soon able to put her mind at rest by explaining that her husband had agreed to go with him to Toxville. He should further explain why he was no longer interested in her secret absence from Pamiston, by sending communications by telephone with her husband that she might be assured of his good faith, and when this was done, he passed to the object of his visit.

"Mrs. Free, my landlord knows that I shall be from home for a few days—except you and your husband. You two I trust implicitly. You have shown yourselves admirably able to keep a secret. True, that secret was your own, but you can be depended upon to keep other important it is. Tad's young life may depend upon it."

"Certainly," said she, "my husband is with you, and trusts you, you may be sure I shall respect your wishes."

"And I thank you. Now, Mrs. Free, while I am away, it is possible that another letter, or other letters, may come from Tad, stating where he is—in case he changes his base. I shall instruct the postmaster to put my mail in your box, and I shall ask you to attend the opening of each mail, that no possible moment may be lost—I earnestly hope that you will go to the post-office and remain there even before the distribution, that you may seize upon such a letter the moment it is placed in the box."

"But what then, Mr. Zellers?"

"Open that letter, no matter what postmark or what address it bears. Of course, it may have nothing to do with this case. But if the letter is from Tad, or from somebody regarding Tad, telegraph me every word of the letter, even to the superscription. It will be received at the station at Toxville where I can pick it up. Will you do this?"

"I will."

His earnest manner inspired her with uneasiness and a thrill of deep excitement. Evidently he believed much might depend upon promptness.

"As to telegrams," he said, "I shall instruct the telegrapher to forward them to Toxville. And I shall persuade him to secrecy. Do you know the telegrapher? Is he a man I can trust to keep his mouth shut?"

Mrs. Free hesitated.

Keeneyes regarded her uneasily. "Mr. Zellers," she said, slowly, "I am going to tell you something that might easily get me into trouble; but since my husband risks so much to go with you I think he would want me to answer you frankly. The telegrapher—Mr. Bob Oyler—is not what I can call a 'safe' man because he is wholly under the influence of a disreputable woman—a Mrs. Hannah Dubois. He tells her everything; but otherwise, he is discreet enough. She has fascinated him, and he holds her doubtful favor by letting her read his every thought."

The detective looked greatly disturbed. "I know whom you mean, Mrs. Free. I have interviewed Mrs. Dubois, and she could do us a great deal of harm. She is a great friend of this telegrapher's, is she? I presume then that Mr. Bob Oyler is a single gentleman?"

"Mr. Zellers, he is not a single gentleman. But his wife is a very simple person, and perhaps chooses to deceive herself. At any rate, she has never made a sign that she knows what is going on. But you had better speak to my husband about this, as I should not care to say more."

"It is unnecessary to go to him," said Keeneyes, "as I shall see tomorrow to be an exceedingly active day, so I must sleep as much as possible in order to make myself fit. And, anyway, you have told me all I need know. I thank you and bid you good-by. You will remember that no criminal has ever been caught in this South Grove affair. If such a one is in this town, it would go very badly with our plans for such a one to learn that I've gone to hunt Tad and Tuck. And if would ruin matters very badly with poor Tad. So I trust to your discretion. And I shall manage the telegrapher—I suppose if he were removed, no one could take his place?"

"The office boy—but you could hardly trust a secret to so volatile and thoughtless a lad as he is."

"Thank you for that additional information."

Keeneyes hurried away, and he went directly to the residence of Mrs. Hannah Dubois.

This remarkable story leads to very extraordinary situations and dramatic episodes. The reader will find it eminently worth reading to the end. Next week's Ledger will contain further chapters of it. The writer has yet the Ledger is to subscribe for it and have it come to your home regularly. Today is a good time to attend to this.

* * *

Cruel Parents.

"No more of this Little-Prudy's-Sister-Susie literature for my children!" declared the man who was the proud father of a big family.

"What's the trouble?" inquired the fellow-author.

"The children in such books are too kind and charitable, and my kids get the notion of going in for that kind of sport, and I can't afford it.

"Last night when I got home I found that my children's property is poor little boy. They had established him bag and baggage in my already crowded domicile. They had given him food and shelter and a loving father. He had lived with his uncle, who treated him badly.

"I am unable to figure that my butting in will make much of a hit with the bad uncle. As I'm fastidiously unchristian inclined, I don't want to come in for his displeasure. But my kids, well steeped in Prudy-ism, had no fear of figure on my chances of getting battered up.

"Another time they found a poor waif of a cat and brought it home. In the Prudy books such an act always gave the parents thrills of pleasure, but it didn't make a bit of a hit with me. I am actually getting into the bad class with my children.

"Kindness and generosity toward all is their motto. As a motto I don't object to the sentiment. It is a good motto, but I don't like to practice it. A sick cat is a source of a nuisance. So is a boy, whether he has a bad uncle or not.

"And then the disciples of Prudy will butt in when a man is on his way to drown pups. When a man is on his way to drown pups I say it is nobody's business. Let things take their natural course.

"The other day when I caught a dog in the act of drowning a newspaper that I myself wished to devour, and when I was in the very act of planting my number ten in the middle of his belt, the children rushed up and delivered an impassioned address something like this:

"'Oh, fie, father! How can you be cruel toward a poor dumb brute? How would you like to be so wickedly maltreated? One should bear in mind one's superiority over the poor dumb creatures and treat them kindly and gently always. Rather would I have the love and confidence of one of these creatures than the pleasure of reading the war news, the beauty hints and the sporting page. But, of course, dear father, I know you did not mean to be cruel, and I am sure you will never do so again. So you may come and kiss me now, and bear in mind what I have said the next time you are inclined to land on a fellow cur!'"

* * *

Quick-fire Camera.

Carl E. Akeley of the American Museum of Natural History has evolved a motion picture camera so novel in its construction and in operating features that it gives promise of revolutionizing at least one of the diversified fields of motion picture photography—that of the naturalist and big game hunter. It is the first motion picture camera equipment with a self-loading mechanism to enable it to enter the hitherto unexplored realm of the hand or still camera and think with the speed of the operator all the vast possibilities of quick action and instantaneous photography, says the Popular Science Monthly.

As a hunter of big game in the wilds of Africa, Akeley has used the ordinary motion picture camera, to find it deficient and even useless. He has attempted time and time again, and at risk of great personal danger, to photograph a herd of charging elephants, or an alligator stealing on the prey, or a trapped lion in its death throes, only to be disappointed in the finished film. So once had the opportunity to photograph a real battle between giant ants of the tropics, but before he could adjust the intricate mechanism of the camera and set it up it was too late. It stimulated him to concentrate his technical knowledge on plans for a new camera.

There are parts of the Akeley camera which have yet to be named—they are so new. Indeed, the instrument is such a radical departure from the newest of the old style machines that it has few features in common with them. In form his camera is like a pistol, and rests in a steel ring on ball bearings and is supported by a curved arm, which rises from a base on which the whole mechanism rests when in operation. The complete apparatus, camera, and panoramic device forms a single unit, and need not be used with or without a tripod.

The camera can be mounted in the twinkling of an eye for rapid picture taking. It can be trained in any direction as accurately and as quickly as a cowboy can draw a gun. The tripod is not at hand a window-sill, a rock, a saddle horn, a tree branch, a knee—in fact, anything stationary may serve as a base for operations.

Where quick action is absolutely imperative, the newspaper photographer can film every stage of an exciting fire rescue, or a wreck, or a sinking ship, or, indeed, anything heretofore solely within the compass of the hand or still camera.

GRAY HAIR VANISHES

And Youth Gets a Renewed Lease When This Simple Home Recipe Is Used.

No rational being would prefer to rob Youth of its rarest charm by wearing gray hair, and this simple home recipe is offered with full assurance that it will effectively darken gray or faded hair in a short time.

To half a pint of water add:

Glycerine	¼ oz.
Bay Rum	1 oz.
Barbo Compound	1 small box

Apply once a day until the hair is the desired color and an application every other week will then be all that is needed. It is also a splendid preparation to correct scalp disorders, to remove dandruff and stop the hair from falling out. The cost of the ingredients is but trifling and they can be had at any drug store.

Her Last Corn-Ache

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Ends Corns

THE FAIRY CORNER

THE JUMP DOG.

There was once a little clockwork dog. He was white and woolly, with bright brown eyes, and he had a pink ribbon around his neck. He belonged to a little boy named Toddy Coy, who used to call him his "jump dog," because whenever he was wound up he jumped nice, neat little jumps.

One day just as Toddy had finished winding his dog with a key that was almost as big as the dog himself, there came a clatter outside of the window and he heard the voice of Benny Rose, his best friend, calling to him.

"Toddy, Toddy!" cried Benny. "There's a fire in Smith's barn."

Toddy was on his feet in a minute. He did not wait to put his jump dog in the play drawer or the key on the end of the mantel. He just stuck the key into the pink ribbon that was tied around the jump dog's neck, and, leaving him on his side in the middle of the nursery floor, ran off to the fire with Benny.

No sooner was Toddy out of the room than the little white dog's eyes danced with glee. "Now is my chance to see the world," he thought. He scrambled to his feet and jumped with little soft jumps to the door. No one was in the hall, so he jumped quietly along it, down the stairs and out into the front garden. "Now I am in the world!" he thought, with delight, and he jumped big, brave jumps down the path and out into the road.

On and on he went, over the dust and over the pebbles, seeing new sights at every jump, and thinking everything that he saw was wonderful. At last, after a long while, he felt his jumps growing weaker.

"I am running down," he thought. And he had just energy enough to hop into some tall grass at the roadside when his jumps gave out altogether. But as he was rather tired with his long journey he did not mind resting a while; so he sat there as good as gold watching the grass grow, till at last up from the ditch at the edge of the road crawled a turtle, a hard-shelled, cross-tempered turtle lady with her name and age cut right across the middle of her shell. She had had it done when she was a silly young thing, and now that she was much older she wished she hadn't. That was what made her such a cross-tempered turtle.

When that lady turtle saw the little jump dog sitting so still by himself in the tall grass she was surprised and cross.

"Hello!" she cried. "Hello! Hello! Hello!" just as if she were talking thru a telephone. "Who are you? Who told you you could rest by my ditch? How dare you go jumping about thru my world?"

"Please, Miss Turtle," said the little jump dog politely, "I'm sorry, but I didn't know it was your world."

"Stuff and nonsense! Stuff and nonsense!" cried the lady turtle. "Go away at once!"

"I'm sorry," began the little jump dog.

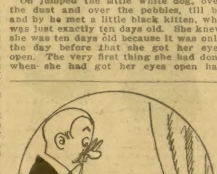
"Then go away at once!" the turtle lady snapped.

"I'll give you my pink ribbon," said the little dog, "if you'll wind me up."

"Will you, really?" cried the turtle lady in delight. "I was just thinking what a lovely sash it would make! It would cover up my name and age beautifully! I'll wind you up right straight away!"

Then the turtle lady wound up the little jump dog. It will leave the key in the keyhole," she said, when she had finished. "Now, can I have the pink ribbon?" The lady turtle spoke in her most affable manner. She was so happy about her new sash that she forgot to be a hard-shelled, cross-tempered lady turtle any more. When the little dog had given her his pink ribbon he hopped joyfully on his way, and as he looked back over his shoulder he saw the turtle lady standing on the edge of the bank straining far forward to try to see her reflection in the pool at the bottom of the ditch.

On jumped the little white dog, over the dust and over the pebbles, till by and by he met a little black kitten, who was just exactly ten days old. She knew she was ten days old because it was the day before that she got her eyes open. The very first thing she had done when she had got her eyes open had been to get lost, and she had been lost ever since.



"What is a court of last resort, pa?" "Courting an old maid."

When she saw the little jump dog coming she was frightened almost out of her nine lives, for she thought that he was a real live dog. She would have run away as fast as she could, only there was no place to run to, so she arched her back and tried to look as big and as fierce as her mother did whenever any dog came around.

"You'd better be careful!" she called out. "I'm angry, and when I'm angry I'm very terrible!"

Still the little dog came on, but more slowly, for he was beginning to run down again, but the kitten didn't know that. "I've scared him!" she thought, and she called out again. "If you come near me I'll eat you all up without any butter or pepper or salt!"

At that minute the clockwork gave out and the little white dog fell over on his side, helpless.

"My goodness gracious me!" thought the kitten, "I've frightened it to death! Poor little dog-kin!"

That was the way that kitten talked. The little white dog was really much larger than she, but since she thought he was afraid of her she wasn't afraid of him any more, so she trotted up to where he lay in the dust to see if he truly was dead or had merely fainted from fright.

"Are you truly dead?" asked the kitten.

"No," replied the jump dog. "I'm only run down. Will you please wind me up?"

"I surely will," said the kitten. "Have you seen mother anywhere?" she asked as she began turning the key.

"No" answered the jump dog. "Why do you want her?"

"Because I'm lost," said the little black kitten drooping her tail sadly. "I've been lost ever since yesterday, and nobody has found me. I'm all alone by myself in the big world."

"Never mind," said the jump dog comfortingly. "There is a hard-shelled turtle lady who is a friend of mine, and I think perhaps if you got on my back and I took you to her she might adopt you."

"That would be lovely!" cried the kitten, and as soon as she had finished winding the little white dog she climbed up on his back and put her little black paws around his neck.

"Hold tight!" cried the little white dog as he set off.

Soon they came to the turtle, whom they found standing on her hind legs practicing waltz steps.

"Miss Turtle," said the little white dog, "I've brought you a nice kitten. It has lost its way and it hasn't anybody to take care of it, so I've brought it to you to keep."

The turtle lady nearly tumbled into the ditch with astonishment and indignation.

"Well, I just won't! So there!", cried the lady turtle. And she clambered down the bank and hid in the mud.

"I don't know any one else to take you to," said the jump dog thoughtfully, "except Toddy Coy, the little boy I belong to. I wanted to see the world, but I will have to go home again after all. Wind me up again, please, kitten."

As soon as they were out of sight the turtle smiled. "I'm glad I don't have to bring up that kitten," she said, as she crawled out of the mud.

But when she saw her new pink sash she just sat down on the bank and cried. That new pink sash was so covered with mud that it was completely spoiled. "If I hadn't been so greedy and hidden in the mud that way I shouldn't have spoiled my new sash," she thought. "It's all my own fault!" and she cried the harder.

She was still crying when the little jump dog reached his home and put the kitten carefully down on the nursery floor. At that minute Toddy Coy came running in from the fire. He was much surprised to find the kitten.

"Mother," he cried, "there's a kitten in the nursery, and you were saying only yesterday that we needed one! Can't we keep it?"

"Yes, of course," answered his mother. "But where did it come from?"

"I don't know," answered Toddy, "and I don't know where my jump dog's pink ribbon has gone either."

"Never mind," said his mother. "I'll give you a new ribbon for the jump dog and one for the kitten, too. Hadn't you better run downstairs and bring it a saucer of milk?"

"You have been very good to me," whispered the kitten as soon as Toddy had left the room, "I'm sorry you missed seeing the world."

"Never mind," said the little jump dog, as he settled himself comfortably in the play drawer. "I'll run away again some day."

* * *

DISTURBING SERVICES.

You have read the "Adventures of Tom Sawyer"; or, if you haven't, you ought to get it out of the library at the first opportunity. Tom was a bad boy, and he took a pinching bug to church, and it got loose. It got out into the aisle, and after many wanderings into the church and sat down on the pinching bug, which pinched his tail and hung on. There were disastrous proceedings for several minutes.

Something of the sort happened one Sunday in a Methodist church in Cleveland. While the sermon was going on two bulldogs got into a fight on the aisle outside and one was thrown into the church. There they continued the battle up and down the aisle, and the preacher drowned their arguments and exhortations, and the congregation forgot its dignity. People even climbed over the pews to get to the doors because the aisles were so crowded. It was one of the most interesting Sunday mornings that particular Baptist church had ever seen.

* * *

IN CIPHER.

The Smart Aleck went into the fruit store. He handed the clerk a bit of paper on which was inscribed:

MUSK.

The clerk wasn't getting his little $6 a week just for counting out grapefruit and things and being pleasant, and he promptly wrote beneath it:

MUSK.

"You're a wise guy!" said the Smart Aleck, and he put down the price, a cent, took the goods, a fig, and departed.

A spectator of the transaction, being a lunkhead, said he might as well be a goat, too.

"What's the answer?" said he.

"The Smart Aleck shoves me the paper with the "A" and the "e" spelled out. "Easy mark. A, figure eight; "A fig. Your rate?" Wanted a fig, and how much would it be? I put the paper back to him with 'Musk' written on it. 'Musk: A scent.' That's how much it would be."

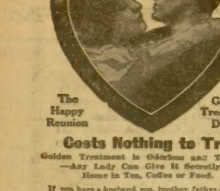
* * *

A PEANUT GAME.

The players sit around small tables, four at each. A handful of peanuts is placed in the middle and a small pair of bonbon tongs is provided for each table.

The children try in turn to remove one peanut at a time without stirring the other nuts. If a player succeeds he is entitled to another chance until he fails, when the turn passes to the child on the left. At the end of twenty minutes a bell is rung and the player at each table having the most peanuts wins. The winners at the different tables play another round until there is only one winner, who is awarded a huge peanut filled with candies.

How John Quit Drinking



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"Did the fish bite freely while you were out?"
"Oh, but everything else did."

Contributory Negligence.

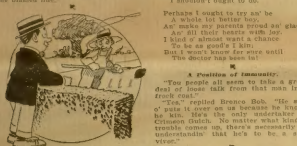
There had been an accident on the worst railroad in the United States. The sole survivor of the wreck was sitting up in his hospital cot swathed in bandages.

"I suppose you're going to sue the company for damages," said the friend at his bedside.

"I should the damaged one. "I shall do nothing of the kind."

"Why not? You've certainly got a clear case against them."

"Clear case nothing! Any intelligent jury in the world would bring in a verdict of contributory negligence. I ought to have known better than to travel on the blamed line."



"How is your garden getting along?"
"Pretty. Every my neighbor's chickens won't scratch it."

Smoke Damage.

Bill—Scientists have estimated that the smoke nuisance costs Pittsburgh nearly $150,000,000 a year, or about $70 for each resident."

Jill—I had no idea the Pittsburgh stogies were used to such an extent."

Just Gratory.

"Pretty good speech, Mr. Dubwate made."

"Yes. Still, I don't see what is to be gained by dragging George Washington, Patrick Henry and Thomas Jefferson into the local race for coroner."

DIVIDED ALLEGIANCE.

I used to be the meanest kid
That ever was, I guess—
To let my pa wash behind the ears
And muddy sister's dress;
To play in school, or shoot a lot
Of paper wads about,
And climb in trees, and scuff my shoes,
An' bust the winders out!

But now I'm sick in bed, an' so
I ain't so awful bad;
I can't tell just how sick I am.
Ner what I've gone an' had.
I used to do just what I pleased,
But now, I'm tellin' you,
I guess I ain't much more'n sick—
I shouldn't ought to do.

Perhaps I ought to try an' be
A little better boy,
An' make my parents proud an' glad
An' all their better with joy;
I kind o' almost want a chance
To show 'em what I can,
But I won't know for more until
The doctor hap been in!

A Position of Immunity.

"Too people all seem to take a great deal of delight in talk about that man in a frock coat."

"Yes," replied Brence Bob. "He sort of has to, because he knows he knows that he's the only undertaker in Crimson Center. No matter what kind o' troubles comes up, there's necessarily an understandin' that he's to be a survivor."

Just Like Real.

"Why don't you quit fussin' and play with those other little girls, Bessie?" said the mother of the little girl, whom she found all alone on the street.

"I am playing with 'em, mamma," was Bessie's reply. "We're playin' housekeepin' and I'm the cook what's just left."

Useless Suggestion.

"Is your boy Josh going to stay on the farm?"

"I'm afraid not," replied Farmer Cornlow. "I've bought him all the stories I could find about boys who run away an' come back on Christmas eve with money enough to pay off the mortgage. But he doesn't seem to take any o' 'em to heart."

Courage.

F. J. Walcott of the Rockefeller Foundation, back from the war zone, said in New York:

"It's a wonderful thing to see the southern boys when the gayest—that the southern boys under heartbreaking difficulties.

"An Englishman officer, after a thaw, went wading one morning knee-deep down a trench.

"Aw, flagging, shaving, eh?' he said to a ruddy Tommy.

"'Yes, sir,' the Tommy replied, with a grin, 'and you don't look at all—you're standing in my shaving water.'"

Gloom.

"He seems to enjoy being gloomy."

"Yep. Seems to me like a fellow who would be perfectly contented sitting alone in a summer cottage during a three days' rain."

Elderly Lady—"I declare, a woman should never marry a man she don't know how to hold it!"
Young Mother—"Nor a tongue!"

What the Hen Said.

Margaret, the 5-year-old, whose pa, rents are fond of bacon and eggs, said Margaret has always been a fan in the country she heard, for the first time, a hen cackle.

"Oh, mamma," she exclaimed, "that dear old hen has just announced, I suppose she says she has laid an egg."

Margaret did not understand the smile, and after a moment's profound thought she came back again.

"And what does she say, mamma," she inquired more anxiously than before, "what does she say when she lays her other egg?"

Unremitting.

For hours the sympathetic mother had listened to her son's tirade against the college that had expelled him in disgrace and against his father for abetting them in it.

"But, dear," she said at last, "you really must blame your father's being angry. You must see that you have made a very bad return for all his unremitting kindness."

"Yes, that's just it," retorted the irate student. "If it hadn't been so confoundedly unremitting I could have pulled thru."

Physical Impossibility.

Millionaire Mix—"Can can't sing out here in the bosses, young man."

Bashful Bean (meekly)—"I know I can't, ma'am. You're sitting on it."

Under Petticoat Rule.

Shoe—"There it be, less red tape when we women get to running things."
Hat—"And more pink ribbon."

Frightened Her.

A young fellow who was the crack sprinter of his town—somewhere in the South—was unfortunate enough to have a very distinct laundress. One evening, when he was out for a practice run in his rather airy abbreviated track costume, he chanced to dash past the house of that dusky lady, who at the time was a couple of weeks in arrears with his washing.

He had scarcely reached home again when the bell rang furiously and an excited voice was wafted in from the porch: "Po' de Lawd's sake, won't you-all tell Marse Bob please not to go out no mo till I kin git his clo'es round to him?"

War Time Symptom.

"Asphodelia Twobbis seems consumed with patriotic fervor; three old soldier boys began to march up and down the streets."

"Yes. Asphodelia has experienced a change of heart. A little while ago she aspired to become an idol of the screen. Now she wants to be the daughter of a regiment."

Not Too Good for Her.

"Am I good enough for you?" sighed the fond lover.

"No," said the girl candidly, "you're not, but you are too good for any other girl."

Defined.

"Pa, what's the difference between a scientific and a pseudo-scientific?"

"A patrie, my son, is one whose heart swells with pride at his country, while a jingo is one whose swelling appears in his head."

The Reason.

"What man over treats anybody?"

"Why, he be a confirmed crouch."

"Oh, he's a doctor."

Discouraged.

Safety — "So Jack is engaged. Is he? And is Fanny the fellow to-be?"

First—"No, she is the sister-to-be."

The Reduction.

At a certain church in a Jersey town is the insatiable custom of the clergyman to kiss the bride after the ceremony. A young woman who was about to be married in the church did not relish the prospect, and instructed her prospective husband to tell the clergyman that she did not wish him to kiss her. The bridegroom obeyed the instructions given.

"Well, Harry," said the young woman when he appeared, "did you tell the minister that I did not wish him to kiss me?"

"Yes."

"What did he say?"

"He said that, in that case, he would charge only half the usual fee."

Under the Evening Lamp.

Mrs. Flatbush—"This paper says, John, that the United States has 56,642 postoffices."

Mr. Flatbush—"Which reminds me, dear, that I forgot to mail that letter you gave me."

Right in Line.

"I see," said his wife, "that these baseball players have progressive ideas on sanitation.

"How so?"

"The paper states that they spent the afternoon swatting flies."

Politeness and Common Sense.

A handsomely dressed damsel entered a crowded street car. A young-looking old fellow, wearing a dilapidated hat and a suit of homespun clothes, rose to his feet.

"Miss, take my seat. I don't look as well as these 'ere gentlemen," he said, nodding to several men, "but I've got more politeness."

Without a word of thanks the young woman sat down.

"Miss," said the old fellow, with a smile, "I believe I left my tobacco pouch on the seat. Will you please pass it up? No sooner was the seat unoccupied than the old fellow ballooned out and sank.

"I believe I'll keep sittin' here, miss," he explained. "I've got a little more politeness than these 'ere gentlemen, but I have found out that it don't get nigh so much common sense."

Salesman—"Do you want a soft or a stiff shirt?"
Customer—"Soft, I think. The doctor said I must avoid starchy things."

A Postponed Wedding.

Some time ago a Brooklyn cook announced to the mistress of the house her betrothal, and fixed the latter part of May at any moment. The woman of the house was delighted, since the cook was a good one.

Months passed, however, without further word of leaving, altho the happy maid-to-be was a frequent caller in the kitchen. So the mistress was finally moved to ask:

"When are you going to be married, Mary?"

"Indade an' I'll never get all. I'm thinkin' mom," was the melancholy response.

"Why, Mary," exclaimed the mistress, "what do you mean? You marry the man who he's drunk an' whin he's sober he won't marry you."

Convincing the Boys.

Father sat in his study one afternoon writing out a speech, when his son called shrilly from the garden:

"Dad! Look out of the window!"

"What a nuisance children are at times!" thought father, but as he put down his pen he glanced at his wife. With a half-smile he raised the sash and stuck his head out. "Well, Harry, what is it?" he asked.

The boy, from a group of youngsters, called out, "Dad, Tommy Perkins didn't believe that you had no hair on the top of your head."

Preparedness.

"There can be no such thing as unpreparedness," said the man who argues vociferously.

"You don't have to be prepared for war if you don't want to."

"Yes; but if you're not prepared for war, you've got to be prepared for a lickin'."

Lady—"I'm collecting for the Cats' Home. Would you tell me the——"
Servant—"The mistress is out, mum, but she said only this morning she'd be glad to get rid of our six kittens!"

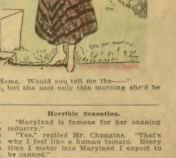
Suspicious.

There are many tales about the canning industry.

Mr. Chugging. "That's why I feel like a human tomato. Every time I solder into Maryland I expect to be canned."

The Legal Route.

Black—"There's there a will there's a way."
White—"Yes; to break it."



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Next day she said to him, with an air of keen disappointment, "Moses, I promised me you'd brush your teeth."

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MUNITIONS OF WAR.

A little box of powder and puff.
A bottle of perfume.
A jar of cream to bleach the skin
As soft and white as snow.

A transformation and a switch.
The best of chestnut dyes.
A bathing suit of lustrous silk.
Some kohl for the eyes.
Here in the trunk that Letty checked
This morning from the station,
To use battle the sea for man's
Annual subjugation.

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Sham Battle Bill—"Lieutenant, the enemy is upon us."

Lazy Lieutenant—"Yes, I know, they've been biting me all night. Why hasn't some medical staff got the mosquito nets into action?"

The Big Failure.

"To what do you attribute his failure?"

"To the fact that he spent his life looking for a way to make money without working for it."

And Censorious.

"Mr. Blunkit is very polished, isn't he?"

"Very! Everything he says reflects on some one."

As It Appears to Motorists.

Hadd—"I see the United States contains 2,250,000 miles of public roads."

Gadd—"I wonder how much of this amount the chickens think they own?"

Miss Fert—"There are 300 reasons why I won't marry you."
Mr. Oldboy—"Name them."
Miss Fert—"Fifty years and 250 pounds!"

He Knew.

Sunday School Teacher—"Who can tell us the name of the great queen who traveled so many miles to see Solomon?" (No answer.) Some of you must remember. The name of this great queen begins with S."

Bright Boy—"Oh, I know, miss. It was the Queen of Sheba."

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"Judging from the looks of the bride I take it that disciplider married for love."

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Mrs. Young—"I wonder why steak smothered with onions is called 'Salisbury steak'?"

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"Does it require great mental effort to be a photographer?"

"Yes, indeed," replied Mr. Snappun. "You have to sit up nights learning witty stories to tell customers in order to get them all to make 'em smile and look natural."

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Brother Bob—"She's as good as gold!"
Sister Sue—"And as expensive as platinum."

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"THERE'S MANY A SLIP"

OUR MOVING PICTURE SHOW
Mr. Hamphat—"How up to the landing, Pete, I believe I've got enough boating for the day."
"Boating agrees with me. It's a fine sport and one gets lots of sunshine and fresh air—"
"But I always feel better and more comfortable when I set my feet on—"
"Dry land!"

ENID AYRON'S MAN

Or, All in the Making

By Paul Crissey

[Copyright 1916 by W. D. Boyce Co.]

Begun in No. 26, June 24. Subscriptions can begin with that issue or back copies can be obtained from news stands, our agents or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER XIV.

MAKING sure that they were alone, Cranston drew a chair up close to the desk where sat the huddled figure of the Doctor. It was the first time the young man had had a chance to notice closely this man who had sought to end his career so abruptly. The uniqueness of the situation and the series of events which had led to their second meeting struck Cranston forcibly, but the business in hand enveloped him, and he lost himself in thought for a moment or two.

It is given to some men to be brave while they have the upper hand of obstacles, and is given to some that they be cowards when the great wheel of fortune reverses their run of luck. Doctor McGruddy was of the latter type. Skilful in the line of work he best knew in the barter of that which he possessed, ever desired to possess, he was typical of the educated adventurer who goes in for the strenuous modes of living. What right he had to the title of "doctor" only he himself knew, and it was only because he thought it might be useful that he adopted it as a part of the certain stage of his varied career. This career itself was worthy of slight study.

Before his adventure with the Little Telerode valley he had never involved himself deeply. Never amiss to committing petty theft, he could add to his worldly possessions, he had kept free from the bigger games—until he had come to "Palmdale." As for scruples, he had none. His morals were the lowest, but physically and outwardly he had always been regarded as a keen business man by his associates, who, it is safe to say, never knew him long enough to gain his real dependability—if he possessed any.

Determined to end the long struggle on the spot, Cranston took it upon himself to judge the man before him. The life in the mountains had given to the Englishman a certain insight into other men's lives as told by their faces, a trait which he had never before possessed. Now he found use for it, and incidentally discovered that it was most reliable in the present case. With an air of assurance that he instinctively knew would bring results, if he had judged McGruddy aright, he asked:

"I'll trouble you first for the credentials you took from my purse in New York."

Doctor McGruddy, with a heavy hand, reached into his pocket and drew them out. Cranston, with a smile, picked them up.

"You really haven't much backbone, McGruddy, have you" he asked politely.

The Doctor sighed.

"Now," continued Cranston, briskly, "a check, certified, for the amount of money you have drawn in my name

CAN YOU DISCOVER THE WORD "CASH" IN THE PICTURE?

Yes? Then You Can Play the $4,000.00 Game—It Works on the Same Principle!

There's one appealing feature about the $4,000.00 Cash Contest for solving pictures the Boyce Publications are now conducting. Namely:

Every class of people can play the game on an equality with every other class; every man or woman or child who participates will be equally armed to win; the primary school and the grammar school and the high school and the good old SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS will each have no advantage over the other from first to last. FOR COMMON SENSE WILL WIN, AND THAT ONLY. Native shrewdness and good judgment—that's what will bring home the $1,000 cash, first award, and every other one of the $4,000.00 in cash gifts.

Twenty-four (24) pictures will appear in the Boyce Publications. One of these pictures will appear in this paper each week each picture, each week, you will find a list of about 50 titles, and from these titles will you select the titles that you think best fit the pictures. All you have to do is to clip out the picture and list of titles each week from our publication. Save them until you have all the 24 pictures. Then you send us your set of answers. Our full prize announcement tells you all about this great Home Game, or, if you wish, we will send you complete details

since you have held the credentials.

Another long sigh from the Doctor, but the check book and the check were forthcoming. Cranston watched the little man's movements with interest. What a yellow cur this plotting crook had been, deep under his hide! His lip curled in contempt.

"You ran your level from the Zero over into the New Man property," continued Cranston, accusingly, and McGruddy nodded. "I can send you to prison for that!"

With a start the man before him awoke.

"Don't do that," he begged, "for God's sake!—anything but that!" His voice trembled.

"You're honest enough to be afraid?"

"Yes—yes! But not—prison, Cranston, not prison!"

Cranston suggested Searl, almost laughing at the pitiful figure before him.

The Doctor sucked in his lips with relief.

"I'll give you a check," he cried eagerly—"a big one. How much?"

Cranston laughed in his face, and his fat slit the table a hard blow. McGruddy cringed at the sound.

"Not by a d—d sight!" cried Cranston, emphatically, "I'll take the big check I have. I want money—real money or——"

"Yes—yes, Cranston," gasped the man. "I'll pay you—I will pay you—I'll say, Cranston—but not that—not—prison."

"Trot it out, then," ordered the boss of the New Man, grimly.

With trembling fingers the Doctor knelt over his big one, combination rattled in his nervous fingers. He laid a big on the table and started to open it.

"Never mind," ordered Cranston, sharply. "How much is there in it?"

The Doctor licked his lips.

"Many—seven thousand," he whispered.

"That will be enough—just fifteen thousand," said Cranston with finality, and he made out a receipt in duplicate. "Now you are squared for trying to rob the New Man."

The Doctor licked his dry lips again, and his eyes never left Cranston's during the room. If the truth be known, the Doctor was wishing that he were man enough to whip that tiger-like creature before him. But he wasn't, and he knew it. Cranston handed a pen across the table.

"Now you will write the truth about that little evening we had in New York together—the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," he said soberly.

The Doctor's shaking fingers dragged the pen across the paper, and the room was silent but for the scratching of that bit of steel.

"I see that there is no woman mentioned here—"

The Doctor shook his head. "That was a lie," he mumbled.

"How—why, I quite for remaining in this part of the country?" asked Cranston.

It—is—poor," replied McGruddy, with a feeble attempt to smile

"Then you think you won't stay," McGruddy shook his head in assent "I'll go," he replied, in a voice that was hardly audible.

Not yet! I've got one or two more little matters to settle with you first For instance, my curiosity is awful strong, Doctor. Who are you—really?"

A frightened look crept into the man's face, and his shifty eyes left Cranston's head which had grown long and lost its New York shapeliness.

"Why—you—it would make no difference," he answered. "I'm a crook—that's all you need to know."

Cranston refused to answer when there was a knock at the door. With a quick movement he warned McGruddy to keep quiet.

"I'm busy just now," he called. "Come again in five minutes" There was an inaudible response, and Cranston whirled on Doctor McGruddy.

"Now, we'll end this up. Here"

He drew the adjoining bedroom door. Returning, he thrust into the man's hand a razor and a pair of shears, then going to the washstand, he turned it up and soap and quickly made a lather.

The Doctor was staring at him and his hands shook.

"Trim them off, Doc," he ordered bruskly. "Quick."

One glance at the Englishman's face determined McGruddy upon action, and with a few swift movements he sheared away the bulk of his beard. The razor, used twice, produced remarkable results, then Cranston went to the door and unlocked it The Doctor's head was in his arms when Hilda Ayron stepped into the room. In her hand she held a photograph which she had found in the old purse. She held it up for him to see.

"Do you know who this is?" she asked.

Cranston waved his hand to the man by the table

"You ask Doctor McGruddy about it," he suggested kindly, and he gazed fixedly out of the window.

The girl crossed the room and stood beside the man, then he slowly raised his face. The photograph fluttered to the floor, and Cranston, apart for any sound of exhaustion from the girl, heard him draw a gasping breath that was really a stifled cry.

But Hilda only looked—into the face of that man who sat before her, the whiskers gone—the man whom she had married.

"You were very brave, weren't you?" she asked finally, with a catch in her voice. "Those whiskers made quite a difference." Her voice was soft and low. "I've looked pretty much everywhere for you," she continued, "and so have father and Enid. I wanted to see you again to tell you—that is, I told you when we were married was a lie. I don't love you. I never did, so you can't feel very happy about that. I was young and insistent, and yet it never varied from the low pitch in which it had started."

An agonized look flitted over the man's face.

"I'm—I'm sorry," he muttered, "but I couldn't stay—not after that. I wanted to go to New York—and I went."

"But I had to stay—and live it down," she said softly, much as if she were speaking to a child.

"You don't understand," he said.

"But you understand," she replied. "I don't love you. I never did! I never did! I forgot you—you understand that?"

The man nodded. "I understand," he said.

"Then that's all," said Hilda, and she slipped from the room.

Cranston turned about and saw the shivering man by the chair. The disgust and loathing which had filled him at his encounter before was changed to an insane desire to choke this wretch who cringed before him. He walked away rapidly across the room and the old look of battle was in his eye.

"Get up!" he cried, and McGruddy rose to two yawning legs that threatened to precipitate him to the floor.

"Do you know what would happen to you if I should tell that pretty girl's story to the men around here? They'd kill you in about three minutes. Shall I?" he terminated.

McGruddy writhed in his fright. "For God's sake! Cranston! Don't let—them—don't!"

But there was little mercy left in the bons of the New Man by this time.

"Do you think this is all you are going to get off with?" he insisted. "You've broken a girl's heart, and you're an all-around crook. Money can't pay for her broken heart. I'm going to——"

"What! For God's sake! I—don't—God! Cranston! Don't!"

But Cranston grabbed him by the collar and swung him to his feet.

"Stand up, you cur!" he cried. "I'm going to give you the worst thrashing a man ever had!"

But somehow, before he could execute his threat, he became aware of a third person in the room, and from the corner of his eye he caught sight of Enid Ayron watching him.

"I'm just giving him an honest spanking, Miss Ayron," he explained hurriedly, but the girl put a restraining hand on his arm.

"After all," she said softly, "isn't there a better way of fighting?"

In his arm the limp McGruddy struggled for breath, and Cranston, puzzled by the girl's words, wrinkled his brow in thought.

"Why?" he asked vaguely. "What do you mean?"

Enid looked at him coolly. "There are many things necessary in life," she answered quietly, "but the fight is one of them, to succeed is another, and to punish wrongdoers is still another, but——"

"But?" whispered Cranston.

"There are some more—one That is the least thought of, and probably the most necessary."

"And that is——"

"Forgiveness," replied Enid, quietly.

Cranston looked down at the miserable wretch at his hands. Pride reached over to the table and got the man's hat. A clock ticked loudly on the wall.

"I have only a few minutes to catch the express East," he said, in a constrained voice, and he led McGruddy to the door.

From the window the girl saw the woman watched him. He entered the depot, and a moment or two later he crept up the steps to a Pullman car. The girl turned to Cranston.

"And that," she cried, "was the best of all we've ever seen in a show."

Cranston tightened his grip on her hands and looked off down the canyon—he hated it.

"Forgiveness!" he whispered. "I guess it is the least used of all the virtues."

And her hand suddenly clasped tighter.

CHAPTER XV.

IF A MUTUAL understanding was supposed to have come over Enid and Cranston, the girl was not aware of it. The young mine boss had learned some lessons at the Ayron ranch-house lady's hand, and it was not the intention of the latter to allow him an easy victory—even where she was most interested.

The late afternoon shadows fell silent, and somewhere down the valley a whistled echoing farewell broke into more ponderous noises. They had witnessed the passing of Doctor McGruddy, and with the last look of that shortbodied man Cranston felt that his trials were at an end. But his training of several months had not forsaken him. He

Astonishing Power of Iron to Give Strength to Broken Down Nervous People

Physician Says Ordinary Nuxated Iron Will Increase Strength of Delicate Folk 200 Per Cent. in Two Weeks' Time in Many Instances.

NEW YORK, N. Y.—In a recent discourse Dr. S. Sauer, a well known specialist who has practiced for years in this country and Europe, said: "If you were to make an actual blood test on all people who are ill you would probably be greatly astonished at the exceedingly large number who lack iron and who are ill for no other reason than the lack of iron. The moment iron is supplied all their multitude of dangerous symptoms disappear. Without iron the blood at once loses the power to change food into living tissue, and therefore nothing you eat can do you any good. You don't get the strength out of it. Your food merely passes through your system like coal through a mill with the rollers so wide apart that the mill can't grind. As a result of this continuous blood-and-nerve starvation, people become generally weakened, nervous and ill run down, and frequently develop all sorts of conditions. One is too often surprised to be afflicted with inhealthy fat; some are so weak they can hardly walk, others think they have dyspepsia, kidney or liver trouble; some can't sleep, others are always sleepy and tired all day; some fussy and irritable; some skinny and bloodless, but all lack physical power and endurance. In such cases it is worse than foolishness to take stimulating medicines or narcotic drugs, which only whip up your tagging vital powers for the moment, maybe at the expense of your life later on. No matter what you take, unless you are not strong and well you owe it to yourself to make the following test: See how long you can work or how far you can walk without becoming tired. Next take two five-grain tablets of ordinary Nuxated Iron—three times per day after meals for two weeks. Then test your strength again and see for yourself what iron has done you have gained. I have seen dozens of nervous, run-down people who were using all the time doubled, and even triple their strength and endurance and entirely get rid of their indigestion, constipation, liver and other troubles in from ten to fourteen days' time. Dr. Sauer also says that the proper form, and this, after they had in some cases been using it for months without obtaining any benefit. You can take it from me, plain about all the wonders wrought by new nerve and blood and stomach strengthener and the best blood builder in the world. The only trouble was that the old forms of inorganic iron, such as iron dust, iron acetate, etc., often ruined people's teeth, upset their stomachs and were not assimilated, and for that reason frequently did more harm than good. But with the discovery of the new method of organic iron all this has been overcome. Nuxated Iron does not injure the teeth and is almost immediately beneficial.

NOTE.—The manufacturers of Nuxated Iron have such unbounded confidence in the potency that they authorize the announcement that they will forfeit $100.00 to any Charitable Institution if they cannot take any man or woman under sixty who lacks iron and increase their strength 200 per cent or over in four weeks' time, provided they have no serious organic trouble. Also they will refund your money in any case where Nuxated Iron does not at least double your strength in ten days' time. It is dispensed by all druggists.

had learned to rely upon himself for his wants, and even for the wants of others. This feeling did not desert him now. The crisis which now confronted him was one for which he was eager, for it was of his own seeking. He had won a place in his own little world, and he had no idea of allowing the present situation to weaken him. Enid withdrew her hand from his, and Cranston realized, without any sense of thrill, however, that the time had come for him to arrange for future happiness.

"Please sit down," he said, and he pushed out the chair that McGruddy had occupied earlier. Enid rested her arm on the desk and gazed at him with considerable interest. Here was a man of her making, partly self-made, but nevertheless a product of her resolutions.

"I don't want you to think, Enid," Cranston began gravely, "that I have taken this—anything for granted. I'm not unmindful of what you have done for me"—he girt made a gesture of impatience which he precluded—"because I am—most grateful. I can't see, tho,' he concluded naively, "why you did it."

The two gloved hands, folded so demurely on the table before him, were an open invitation in a way, but Cranston avoided the opportunity from choice. He had come to feel, in a manner akin to instinct, that what Miss Lane expected of him, and he knew, thus instinctively, that she would far rather have him make his demands outright than to take advantage of that feeling which he could not fail to know existed between them.

Enid was not insulted by the afternoon's session any too easy for him. She looked at him frankly, but there was a tickle in her eye which Cranston avoided with clumsy skill.

"Do you remember that morning on the train?" she asked, Cranston nodded, and a shameful red colored his face. "Well," continued Enid, "I realized that morning that you were the sort of man who had no useful part in the world. You didn't even look as if you had an idea that you were your own. Naturally, this interested me, and I made certain suggestions which I hoped might at least rouse your curiosity. They did, and when you got off with me I knew that I had been successful. But you remained a burden, if you will pardon my putting it that way. I had to dispose of you in some way, so I suggested that you manage the New Man. After that I need scarcely say, You are now a healthy, full-grown plant." She smiled a little and waited for this startling dialogue to sink into her companion.

"The—a plant, though," suggested Cranston, smilingly, "but I imagine it's right. Do you know I've got a lot to thank you for? If I have become successful in a way, you are responsible for it, but you are wrong about one thing."

"What is that?"

"The fact that you aroused my curiosity. You didn't. It wasn't aroused, nor was I curious. I was dreaming—and I was attracted, not by what you said, but by you!"

A faint tinge of color now heightened the girl's complexion, and she sank back in the semi-darkness of the office.

"But you did dispose of me in a very fortunate manner for myself. I have tried to merit your confidence whether I have or not is for you to say. However, I have changed—I can't help feeling that."

"I am glad," said the girl, softly, "that I have helped make you—"

"A new man," finished Cranston. "But the job is not yet complete. Neither are some of the other things that I would like to talk about. One of them is—is that a man is never complete until he has a—a wife and a home of his own." He thumped the desk with his flat. "I don't want to talk about that—now," he complained. "There will be a better time later. Now run up to the house and join your father."

As he spoke he arose from his chair and put his hand on the girl's shoulder. The sun had crept around and was stealing in a last ray or two over the top of Mineral Mound, and it struck on the girl's hair and burnished it like gold.

"I'll see you tonight," said Cranston, coolly insistent.

With a movement of disappointment Enid answered.

"You might as well tell me now. "I know—" hat you want to say. It doesn't matter—" how she meant to use—or anything else—I want you to understand that."

"I do," said Cranston, emphatically, "but I would rather wait—until tonight."

He saw the girl as far as the door, watched her down the steps, and saw her dress fluttering on up-trail.

Alone in the office he turned to the window and looked out on the canyon. Trees and shrubs were green, and the newly washed sides of the hills were clean in the evening light. Far to the east the blood-red moon was slowly climbing Bear Hill. With a sigh Cranston dropped into the chair and buried his face in his hands.

There was a timid knock, and the door opened as Cranston bade the visitor enter. Suddenly realizing that a stranger stood before him, the mine boss arose and muttered a hasty apology.

"You telegraphed for a mine expert," said the visitor in a businesslike tone, "and I happened to know the expert. I am Mr. Graham of the People's Trust Company, in Shoshone. For some time," he rattled on, "our bank has held a communication from New York regarding your location. Your family in England have been most anxious to locate you, Mr. Cranston, and I am representing them."

"Yes?" asked Cranston, soberly.

"The short of it is," said Mr. Graham, apologetically, "your brother is dead, and your father and mother are anxious to have you home. It is a position of responsibility—and most admirably filled by your brother up to the time of his death. They desire you to have that an immediate answer is most urgent.'

"What proof have I of that?" replied Cranston, bitterly.

"Only this," replied the Shoshone banker, and as he spoke he laid on the table before Cranston a letter. "This is their offer—and a most flattering one indeed, Mr. Graham smiled, "indeed, if you accept it, I am sure you will, you will find that your days of want are at an end." He laughed agreeably. "Also, there is a matter of several thousands of pounds to your credit awaiting you in New York."

Cranston rapidly scanned the missive. It contained, in general, the information imparted to him by the banker, and this from his home at the present moment was a triumph, and Searl smiled his rightful smile. "Your reply," he said, could be filled, he believed, without worry on his part. True, it would mean an exchange of the mine employes for the fashion tailor's product. It would mean a drawing-room instead of his cabin, and he mused on the change of location in place of the freedom of the hills. He sighed, and looked off down the canyon. The sun had entirely cleared and he looked at the banker

"Here is my answer, Mr. Graham," he replied soberly, "and I trust it contains any disrespect. You may transmit that answer to my father and mother in London."

He tore the letter into fragments and the pieces fluttered slowly to the floor before the banker's feet. He smiled faintly.

"But——" stammered the Shoshone gentleman

"It is irrevocable."

"You must realize——" argued the perturbed banker.

"Good afternoon," replied Cranston, directly.

With mouth agape, Mr. Graham staggered to the door and flung it open.

"Well, I'll be d—d!" he muttered to himself in astonishment.

"But I won't," chuckled Cranston, 'at least not by a London crowd."

His lips formed a whistle and he darted down the stairs. It was a cool evening without, and the gray twilight fell like a soft blanket over Little Telerode.

"It's worth it—to make what you're to be—and what you've become," mused Cranston to himself, as he strode down the road. At the foot of the path which led to the mouth of the New Man, he stopped. A burly figure was careening down the hill as fast as its flat legs would allow.

"Oh! It's you, Misther Cranston," an Irish voice cried happily. "Well, I'm glad it is, for there's good news this night, sor."

"Dan," cried Cranston, eagerly, "what have you found?"

Big Dan chuckled "Now, ain't you th' eager boy? Sure, a child—if I thought ye would niver found tome t' look at a moine again. An' now yer as anxious as iver."

"For God's sake, Dan,, what have you found? A new vein?"

Big Dan shrugged his shoulders

"Not a new vein, me boy, but a brand-new lead in th' old one. That lost vein we picked up on, accidintly-like, when we had run over into the New Man. Th' whole pay streak runs sizzag down into the earth, sor. It's all in th' way of its own boundaries. It shtarts from the east and runs west, then from th' west it runs down, and from that to the east west agin, an' so on. There was a divil of an upheaval whin th' old lady made Mineral Mound, but she did a good job."

"Then we can fill the contract!"

The Irishman looked at him calmly.

"If only we can get five hundred t'ousand for th' New Man—refuse him!"

But Cranston would hear no more.

The light in the Arabella was burning when he came breathlessly up the trail.

"We've struck the gold again!" he cried to Enid.

"I thought so," she faltered.

"You knew!" he accused her, and she blushed. "But you don't know the rest."

She looked up at him

"I can guess," she replied simply, and she did, for her arms were open when Cranston caught her to him.

The End

* * *

Biggest Oil Output.

The output of oil from the wells of the country for the year ended the total of little less than 800,000 barrels a day—the largest daily average production in the history of the United States. These figures have been arrived at from a study of the statistics of the country for May, taken with the weekly reports from the Oil, Paint and Drug Reporter's correspondents in all the oil fields of the country. The production and consumption of oil have reached a parity, says the New York Times.

The banner-producing districts at present are the mid-continent, Louisiana and gulf coast fields, with a total daily output of nearly 510,000 barrels. The mid-continent operators are drilling at the rate of nearly 1,400 wells a month, with more than the average number of gushers and large producers among the completions. The week's reports indicate that more crude is going into storage than has been possible under the conditions of stringency of supply, which marked the period prior to the opening of the spring drilling season.

Already the warning has gone out that producers should proceed a little carefully and not break the market by pouring out a flood of new crude oil. The banner mark in the mid-continent field, as far as the output of crude oil was concerned, was attained in the spring of 1915, with a total of 400,000 barrels of new oil daily. So much has been said of late of increased demand and poverty of supply, that it has not been generally realized just what the mid-continent field had been doing during the last few weeks.

The production there is now 380,000 barrels a day—within 20,000 [illegible] the highest ever attained—and [illegible] may surpass this total.

* * *

Fodder for Gum Chewers.

Six million five hundred thousand pounds of chicle, the basis of chewing gum, were imported into the United States in 1915, according to figures compiled by the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce at Washington. This product is the dried milky juice of the tropical sapodilla tree. The countries from which practically all of it was obtained were Mexico, Canada, British Honduras, Venezuela and the Central American republics. Mexico and Canada between them provided more than two-thirds of the total amount imported. The chicle imported into this country during the last ten years has cost nearly $75,000,000, which gives some idea of the popularity of gum chewing among Americans

* * *

Sunshine eventually punctures the thickest cloud

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17 Jewel Dueber-Hampden High Grade Movement, Adjusted Steel Escape Wheel with Gold Filled Double Stock 20 Year Guaranteed Case.	$ .10 the 2nd week	$ .90 the 9th week	$1.60 the 16th week
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	$ .30 the 4th week	$1.10 the 11th week	$1.80 the 18th week
	$ .40 the 5th week	$1.20 the 12th week	$1.90 the 19th week
	$ .50 the 6th week	$1.30 the 13th week	$2.00 the 20th week
	$ .60 the 7th week	$1.40 the 14th week	$2.10 the 21st week
The offer is open to every honest person of legal age in the U. S.	$ .00 the 8th week	$1.50 the 15th week	$22.50—Total

Ladies' high grade up-to-date bracelet watches $18. Ladies' full Jewel Dueber-Hampden watches $15. All sold on same easy movie plan. Send your dime today and get your watch on this easy plan.

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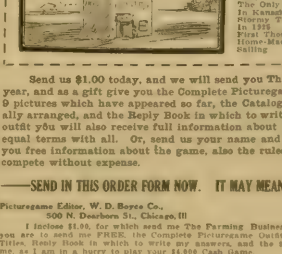

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A Bargain in Shoes.

A nice young man resolved to present his beloved girl with a pair of shoes. He accordingly procured her measure and purchased a 10-shilling pair.

In order to make the present appear more valuable he marked 25 shillings upon the soles of the shoes, and, at his request, the clerk, who was a friend of his, put a receipted bill for 25 shillings into one of them. The presentation was made and the sweethearts were happy as sweethearts should be. But mark the sequel, says London Answers.

The girl examined the shoes in the daylight and was not satisfied. She was convinced that her sweetheart had been cheated in the purchase of such a pair of shoes at that price. She decided to go and change the shoes and obtain a better bargain.

Next day she appeared in the shop and selected a pair of shoes, price 15 shillings, and politely requested the clerk to take back the shoes for which she said her friend had paid 25 shillings. The receipted bill was produced in proof, and the bootman found it impossible to go "behind the returns."

The smart girl took her 15-shilling pair of shoes, obtained 10 shillings in money and went home happy and satisfied. The boot seller sent a fresh bill to the young man, who promptly paid the difference, but he thinks the girl may prove too smart for him later on.

* * *

New Life Saver.

Scientists in the Johns Hopkins University are now experimenting with a newly discovered serum which they believe will eventually be able to restore a person to life after asphyxiation or drowning. The experiments performed upon animals have in a number of instances restored them to life after they have been to all appearances dead for several hours. A few days ago an animal was brought back to life four hours after its apparent death by the injection of this serum. In this case, however, the animal died shortly afterward from blood pressure. It is believed that this tendency can be overcome and the new serum utilized in the resuscitation of human beings who would otherwise "die" permanently.

* * *

Also a Doormat.

"I hear that you called on your girl's father last night. How did he take your suit?"

"By the coat collar."

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Chicago Ledger

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COPIES WEEKLY.

GENTLE JABS.

Love and philosophy are sworn enemies.

However, it is far better to grin than to groan.

The best some people can do is think near thoughts.

People who think before they speak seldom say much.

A strong will is firmness; a strong won't is obstinacy.

A blind man and a deaf servant make an ideal combination.

Dreamland is the only land where we all enjoy equal rights.

Empty compliments and senseless abuse are on an equal footing.

Some men are long on dollars and shoes on common sense.

The letter P, like selfish friends, is first in pity and last in help.

A successful blacksmith can either shoe a horse or make a horseshoe.

The rooms in a house do not interest the burglar as much as a good haul.

Widows are successful in handling men because they know exactly what not to do.

There is more true philosophy in an inch of laughter than there is in a yard of sarcasm.

The tongue of a wagon says never a word, but it gets there ahead of the rest of the outfit.

Each man is a book if you only know how to read him—and some books are bound in calf.

There is always room at the top because so many men would rather remain in the wine cellar.

The coat of a horse is the gift of nature, but the coat of a donkey is often the work of a tailor.

Philosophy teaches us to take things as they come—but the trouble is that they frequently fall to come.

Girls, don't be snippy and stuck up because you are young and handsome. It may not take long to outgrow it.

The highwayman who requests his victim to throw up his hands and throw down his arms simultaneously is asking too much.

Satan cares nothing whatever about a man's attending church on the Sabbath if he gets his services the other six days in the week.

Riches do not bring happiness. Neither does poverty, for that matter, so people might just as well accumulate what wealth they can in an honest way.

No wonder the fair sex is clamoring for equal rights. As it now stands, when a man dies his better half is entitled to only a third of his estate.

Home and Health

FASHION NOTES.

Some afternoon frocks have all the appearance of a coat.

Ruffled wrists are very attractive features of the new sleeves.

A big Italian straw hat, trimmed with a fringed scarf, is a pretty thing for country wear.

Georgette crepe abates in popularity not a jot, for now it can be had in designs as well as in plain colors. It is sheer, but it also has a durability that is remarkable.

The big bow made of tulle is easily first favorite in the millinery world. It is a boon to women, for it may be bought ready made or it can be arranged at home without the least difficulty. One of these toques was covered with shaded violets, then a butterfly bow made of dark purple tulle was added, and the toque was finished. The tulle in this case was so dark in color that it looked almost black. The most elaborate ribbon bows for hat trimming can be made in this way, and they will always look well and professional if they are firmly tied with strong linen thread. This method of making bows is as economical as it is effective because the length of ribbon can be untied at any time, slightly moistened and then ironed out, when it will look like a fresh piece of ribbon.

NEEDLEWORK NOTES.

A pretty tea cloth can be made out of heavy scrim, hemstitched at four-inch intervals to form squares. The squares that border the edge can have the corners embroidered with a design in cross.

A piece of cardboard with rounded edges should be kept in the family mending basket. It is a great help when patching play dresses. The cardboard can be slipped into an inconvenient place and be held the material taut while the patching is accomplished. It is also a help when mending stockings, which, by the way, can often be patched to better advantage than darned, especially if the hole is large.

Dainty embroidery is used to trim the new pink lawn lingerie. Garments come made up and ready stamped in this attractive fabric. They need to be embroidered, either in the same shade of pink or in white. Prices on these novelty garments run about the same as prices on ready stamped white garments. Crocheting sweaters in the new "teasle" wool, with collars and cuffs in angora wool, is another form of needlework for the person that hints fair to be popular this season.

HEALTH NOTES.

Figs are becoming a national delicacy. Little need be said of their medicinal value, save that as a laxative they are particularly good, and it would be well advisable to use as part of the daily diet.

As a cosmetic, buttermilk acts as an astringent. It is a mild bleach, is cleansing and refining to the skin; in fact, it is a perfect beautifier when contains virtues superior to many so-called "liquid beautifiers."

Never rub the eye in which a cinder has lodged, but rub the other eye. This will cause the affected eye to water in sympathy, thereby floating the offending material. Use a boracic acid eyewash after the cinder has been removed to relieve the irritation.

For years it has been dinned into our ears that we should not eat before going to sleep, and we have forgotten many a pleasant bite for fear of sacrificing our good health. And now along comes a noted physician and tells us that many morning headaches were merely the result of hunger. This does not mean that we can immediately proceed to gorge ourselves with all sorts of sweets and not have to pay the penalty the next morning. Breakfast should be eaten during the midnight repast, and one should substitute some wholesome sandwiches—cheese and lettuce, for instance—some and nourishing and can be eaten with impunity even during the wee small hours.

FOR THE HOUSEWIFE.

Always use ice water when mixing pie crust.

Ink stains in a carpet, if of long duration, must be treated with oxalic acid.

Put plenty of butter into the gravy you wish to keep. Cake eaten immediately does not require as much.

A bunch of celery broken fine and put in a tin or wooden box is fine to rub flatirons in while ironing. It will keep them from sticking.

When the curtain rings and pole ends grow discolored and black, they quickly brighten up and show most of their original luster if they are boiled in vinegar for a short time.

A large tray to carry dishes to and from the dining-room table is a great step saver, but better yet is a wheel tray. The first cost of this is rather large, but the housewife might afford to indulge in one, for its convenience can hardly be overestimated.

RECIPES.

STRAWBERRY SHERBET—Roll together for fifteen minutes two cupfuls of sugar and four of water. Soak a teaspoonful of gelatin until soft in three tablespoonfuls of cold water in the meantime, and then pour the boiling syrup on it slowly and when cold add a pint of strawberry juice and the juice of two lemons. A quart of ripe berries, pressed thru a colander and then strained thru a cheesecloth, ought to give a pint of juice. Freeze the mixture until stiff, remove dasher, and pack for two hours.

TOMATO SOUP—Two pounds of ripe, red tomatoes, two carrots, one bunch of herbs, two quarts stock, one and a half ounces dripping, one and a half ounces cornstarch, six peppercorns, salt and pinch of castor sugar. Break the tomatoes into an enameled saucepan with the drippings, herbs and seasoning. Wash and grate the carrots, add the carrots and add to the other ingredients. Cover the pan and cook for half-hour. Add the stock and boil for another half-hour. Mix the cornstarch to a smooth paste with cold stock, add it to the soup, pass all thru a sieve and serve.

GREEN PEPPERS STUFFED—Two green peppers, two cups chopped new potatoes, four tablespoonfuls of boiled dressing and two tablespoons chopped green pepper, four cups shredded lettuce. Put the rabbits and pepper tops thru coarse food chopper and add the dressing. Wash the pepper, cut off the stem ends, remove seeds and white fiber then fill pepper. Set in cold place several hours. With sharp knife cut each pepper in four lengthwise. Carefully lay the slices on shredded lettuce. Serve with French dressing.

APPEARANCES.

"But they had to keep up appearances," Mrs. Gadsby declared, speaking of a young couple who had lived beyond the husband's salary and were in all sorts of trouble.

"Why did they—what appearances" the woman opposite asked.

"The clothes question."

"Why, they had to live to some extent at least like their friends did, the people they visited, else they would have had to live in a nice neighborhood and dress respectably and entertain a little once in a while."

"No," the woman opposite insisted. "They only thought they did. They were merely keeping up with appearances and didn't know how foolish it was when they couldn't afford it."

"But what could they have done? They couldn't go and live in the slums, and they had to keep up their self-respect."

"It depends upon what you call self-respect. I can maintain mine best by not getting up with my neighbors. And it wasn't necessary for them to go to the slums, wherever those may be. I know a couple who found two rooms out on a side street and went to housekeeping in them with the few bits of furniture they could afford to buy. Most of their wedding presents were packed away as not suitable for their environment. They were content to live after the same unaristocratic neighborhood with which they were most familiar, but they didn't mind that."

"I should have thought they would."

"At any rate, they didn't mind. It enough for them that they married until the man got a big salary."

"Did their friends come to see them?"

"They certainly did. Some of the callers came from curiosity, I suppose, and some probably pitied them, but they were all prepared for the same. The point was that they did not spend more than they had, and even out of the little they saved managed to."

"But didn't they have to go shabby?"

"They did sometimes, they went without many things they were accustomed, but you see they were very much in love, and they had counted the cost and were prepared."

"What about them now?"

"Oh, they're living in a house of their own, but I doubt if they are any happier than when they were going without in their two rooms. But they proved to me that it is not necessary to keep up appearances."

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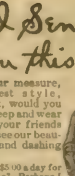

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Morbus, Dysentery, Diarrhoea, Colic, Cramps, Indigestion, Dyspepsia, Heartburn, Sick Headache, Vertigo, Dizziness, Nervous Prostration, Nervous Debility, Hysteria, Melancholia, Insanity, Suicidal Mania, Homicidal Mania, Kleptomania, Pyromania, Dipsomania, Nymphomania, Satyriasis, Sexual Perversion, Sexual Impotency, Sexual Neurasthenia, Sexual Exhaustion, Sexual Weakness, Sexual Debility, Sexual Decrepitude, Sexual Decay, Sexual Old Age, Sexual Death, Sexual Hell, Sexual Damnation, Sexual Perdition, Sexual Oblivion, Sexual Annihilation, Sexual Extinction, Sexual Nothingness, Sexual Nonexistence, Sexual Eternity, Sexual Infinity, Sexual Immortality, Sexual Glory, Sexual Heaven, Sexual Paradise, Sexual Bliss, Sexual Ecstasy, Sexual Rapture, Sexual Delirium, Sexual Frenzy, Sexual Madness, Sexual Idiocy, Sexual Imbecility, Sexual Senility, Sexual Dotage, Sexual Second Childhood, Sexual Infancy, Sexual Babyhood, Sexual Nursery, Sexual Cradle, Sexual Crib, Sexual Rattle, Sexual Bottle, Sexual Nipple, Sexual Pacifier, Sexual Diaper, Sexual Pin, Sexual Safety Pin, Sexual Baby Carriage, Sexual Baby Buggy, Sexual Baby Coach, Sexual Baby Wagon, Sexual Baby Cart, Sexual Baby Perambulator, Sexual Baby Stroller, Sexual Baby Walker, Sexual Baby Jumper, Sexual Baby Swing, Sexual Baby Rocker, Sexual Baby Chair, Sexual Baby Table, Sexual Baby Bed, Sexual Baby Crib, Sexual Baby Cradle, Sexual Baby Nursery, Sexual Baby Room, Sexual Baby House, Sexual Baby Home, Sexual Baby Family, Sexual Baby Children, Sexual Baby Grandchildren, Sexual Baby Great-Grandchildren, Sexual Baby Great-Great-Grandchildren, Sexual Baby Great-Great-Great-Grandchildren, Sexual Baby Great-Great-Great-Great-Grandchildren, Sexual Baby Great-Great-Great-Great-Great-Grandchildren, Sexual Baby Great-Great-Great-Great-Great-Great-Grandchildren, Sexual Baby Great-Great-Great-Great-Great-Great-Great-Grandchildren, Sexual Baby Great-Great-Great-Great-Great-Great-Great-Great-Grandchildren, Sexual Baby 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Motorcycle Mark

Or, Rivals of the Wheel

By Jasper Merriweather

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CHAPTER III.

A WHOLE week had passed away, and Mark was amusing himself shooting at a target with a little twenty-two caliber rifle, when around the merry voice of his chum Bantam came floating over the fence in the rear lot, and was followed by the heavy-set figure of the Lightfoot boy climbing the board barrier.

"Somehow I don't seem able to get over as quick as I did when that old black gentleman cow was rampaging around," laughed Bantam, as he came up to where the other boy stood, looking thru the barrel of his gun, to see whether it needed any cleaning beyond pushing an oiled rag thru with a rattan ramrod made for the purpose, having a slit at one end.

"Oh, well, you wouldn't expect to," chuckled Mark, turning on him; "most of us need what Professor Lane calls an incentive when we're trying to do our best. Sometimes it's a prize in a race, or the applause of the crowd at a baseball game; and in your case it was a stake like you'd taken for those horns of the little black bull. There was a time when they looked good to get me going to me, Bantam."

"I reckon they did that same, Mark; but you beat him to the fence, didn't you? Gee whiz! Talk to me about sprinting; if you didn't smash all records that time, then I don't know what does, and I think I ought to, when they're my favorite diah. But some people are saying that gentleman, Mr. Chamberlain, didn't treat you as white as he might have done. I'm not mentioning it myself, because I think he ought to have done more than thank me, for I didn't have only a little part in saving his girl; but you took big stake, Mark."

Mark frowned.

"Please don't mention it again, Bantam," he said, quickly. "You know me well enough to understand that getting a reward was the last thing I'd ever think of, when doing a stunt like that. Why, there wasn't anything else for me to do, you know. Grandma stood by, and see that little girl gored by the bull, could I? Not in a thousand years. And he thanked me, with tears in his eyes, which was all I could expect. More than that, he came to our house when I was away, and told my folks all about it; because when I got home mother just threw her arms around my neck and cried, while dad squeezed my hand, and looked so proud that I felt as if I'd like to meet up with an old bull every week, if it came about like that. Mr. Chamberlain knew that I wouldn't accept any money for doing my duty. He is a sensible man, and I wish people'd mind their own business."

Bantam looked sideways at his chum, and shook his head.

"Well, you are a queer one, Mark," he said, slowly; "but hang the luck, if I don't like you all the better for acting that way. Most fellers would have had their hand held out after doing such a slick job as that, and expectin' to see something big drop in it; but you get all the satisfaction you want out of knowing you've done your duty. But say, I've got to go down to the station, and see about sending up a box of groceries my folks have had come from the city by freight. And I thought that mebbe, if you didn't have much to do, and wanted to stretch your legs, you'd go along with me."

"Sure I will, Bantam, if you'll wait till I put my gun in the house. I've got an errand myself downtown that I can do. Nothing like killing two birds with one stone, you know."

Five minutes later, and the two fast chums were walking along the road, for Mark lived on the outskirts of the town. Bantam was usually a fund of information, and could be depended on to know all that was going on in the community; for he could keep up so many of the facts he passed along was a mystery. Some of the boys were wont to call him "Gossip," but that Bantam probably might be that as a certain dressmaker came to his house two days a week, from the stuff she let out on to say, with one of his wide grins.

"You mean he's keeping things stirred up around the house, and that's the cycle of his, I reckon?" Mark observed. "That's stale news, because I've seen him spinning his wheels in the dust of the road in front of our place as many as six times a day. Seems like he takes a heap of pride in keeping that piece of road his race track; and I've been thinking it's done just to get me green with envy, because I've got a motor, and I've always been to own a buzz wheel."

"Yes, that's all true enough, Mark," declared Bantam; "and the fact that the farmers are getting tired of being crowded off the pike by Ferdy and his chow-chow. Why, I've been nearly run scared every single day by hearing his horn; and then along he comes with a roar and a cloud of dust, when the wagons are squeezed into the ditch alongside the road to let him have plenty of room."

"I can easily believe that of Ferdy," Mark remarked, "because he likes to hog the best of the road, with that machine. But you'd wonder why some stubborn farmer didn't refuse to get off the earth, and let him pass by."

"Oh, well, you know that sounds nice to say it to yourself, Mark, but if you was in a wagon, with a load of a big load of hay, you'd get the staggers, too, when you heard that thing coming all mad after you, and the team coming along in front. I reckon if he did run into a load of hay it'd be the last thing he'd think of what would happen to the hay, once that gasoline tank exploded. That's what scares 'em most, I reckon, and for that they'd have stood their ground long ago, and made him eat dirt, before they'd back down. And Ferdy, he knows what a bull he's got, too, for he always shouts out something as he flashes past. Why, that thing, Mark, is built on a protest to the town council; and notifying his dad that they'll hold him responsible for any accident that's a collision. It's gettin' past a joke, let me tell you, old feller."

Mark sighed.

"Seems to me some boys don't half appreciate all that comes their way without the asking," he mused, aloud. "that Ferdy Clifford never expresses a wish that his rich mother don't try and pan out to him, but he's ever ready to spoiled darling he's it. Now, whatever I've got I've had to earn, and I reckon I enjoy things a heap more than he does. But I'm ashamed to tell you, Bantam, that for once I can't help envying him his great luck, whenever I see him go past on that gas wheel."

"He knows it, too, bet your life, Mark; and that gives him more chance to be a little. But he's bound to come to the end of his rope before long. Every single day I'm expectin' to hear that Ferdy's been carried home in a wagon, with his leg broke, or his arm fractured, or his handsome face gouged so that he'll carry the marks with him as long as he lives. It's a pretty serious thing, I reckon, to take a header when you're going at sixty miles an hour. Whew! Excuse me, please. I'd as soon face another bull—with a handy fence close by, of course."

Mark laughed heartily at the quick way in which the stout boy added to his rash assertion.

"Well," he said presently, as they entered the town, "let's forget about Ferdy, and talk of something that makes us feel happier. I didn't get fooled on that new fishing hole, did I, Bantam?"

"When they saw us come home that evening, Mark, with about as heavy strings of fine fish as we could stagger under, they were all wild to know where we struck it so rich."

"But we had fixed it up not to give the secret away, hadn't we?" Mark went on to say, nodding his head wisely as he spoke, "and ever since they've been trying their best to find it out. Why, twice since then we've been out, and had pretty decent luck; but we had to sneak it before daylight; because if any boy saw us with our poles on our shoulders, the news would have gone around like wildfire, and chances are there'd have been a whole procession of kids on our trail, bound to know just where our secret fishing hole was hidden."

"That's always the way with most fellers," complained Bantam; "they won't get a bustle or nail fine comb things for themselves; but just let another boy run across a good fishing place, or a new patch of gingerbread, and they're wise, and they're crazy to go along. Course that hits me some, too; because you do nearly all the fishing for both houses; but then nobody could expect me to be smart. It don't run in the Lightfoot blood to do things."

"Well, you shouldn't say that, Bantam," cautioned Mark. "Get that notion out of your head, and remember that most that one of these fine days you're bound to set the river on fire, and surprise folks more than a little. Your race got started. Large objects move slowly, you know; but once they get going everybody's bound to take notice, and let them have room, or be ground under. Perhaps I'm more like a flash in the pan, soon over with; but then you begin you'll keep going steady."

"Huh, it's mighty nice in you saying all that, Mark, and knowin' what a decent sort of chum you are; but I guess I know my limitations; and the winking-up day my pretty far off. Adolphus Gustavus Gregory Lightfoot. Whew! It always weakens me just to run off that string of names, you know."

They were by this time close upon the railroad station, Bantam said the way was open for freight department, meaning to look and see if there was a box there for him, and Mark, after speaking to the agent who had the freight in his care, about the matter. And as this was the busiest part of the day, as far as the Lichtfoot had many of her supplies sent out from a fancy grocery in the city, the boy had just the chance.

"That box yonder kind of looks like it might be the stuff," he remarked, soon after he had stepped inside the building, and saw that it was the station hand busily employed doing something or other with a truck. "Yes, guessed it the first shot, Mark. These people get pretty much the same kind of cases each time, you see, and I'm onto the fact. Now, I'll just see how I've guessed it, and ask Finnegan take it up to the house on his express wagon; then I'm ready to go with you to the old swimmin' hole. See Whittaker! Look at that, would you?" There was hardly any need of Bantam saying the thing, because Mark already had his eyes glued upon the object that leaned against the inside wall of the freight building.

"Yes," he said, with a gulp, "it's a sure-enough motorcycle, and looks like the finest kind going, from other lucky fellow is following Ferdy's example; or perhaps he's got tired of the one he owns, and has coaxed his maw to send for the best made. But a cat may look at a king, they say, Bantam, and I guess we won't hurt it any if we stand and take our fill of gasing, with our hearts in our mouths with envy."

"Tell me about that, will you?" ejaculated Bantam, as they stood there and took in what little they could see of the crated machine.

The burlap had become loose in places, and Bantam did not hesitate to pull this aside, so that they could see the magnificently fashioned contents of the crate, with the dark red that gave the motorcycle such a rich effect.

All at once Bantam gave a screech. Would, at the sudden excitement of the moment, and all he could do was to clutch the arm of his chum and drag him around to the other end of the long crate. Here Bantam pointed at something, and made several dismal gurgles in his throat, as tho trying the best he knew how to tell his companion to look for himself and see.

As Mark once more cast his eyes down he saw that Bantam was pointing dramatically at a big soiled card tacked on to a part of the crate, and evidently bearing the address of the lucky fellow, man or boy, for whom that wonderful buzz wheel was intended. And with a sensation in the region of his heart that was as near amazement as anything he had ever felt, Mark read the following inscription:

"Mark Fletcher, care of Mr John J. Fletcher, Station Agent, Cumminsville, N. Y.

"From August Chamberlain, New York City. All Charges Prepaid."

CHAPTER IV.

BANTAM, will you do me a favor?" was the first thing Mark managed to say, and on seeing his chum look to very sober, he went on without waiting for an answer, with a desperate effort managed to reclaim his lost voice enough to gasp:

"Shall I will. What is it, Mark?"

"Stick a pin in me as far as you please!" remarked the latter, soberly.

"Great Governor! What'd I want to do that for?" exclaimed Bantam, amazed beyond words. "I think I must be asleep and dreaming, that's why," retorted Mark, as he rubbed his eyes again, and once more stood and gave a stare at that magical card bearing his name. He spelled it out, letter for letter, and then even pronounced the name to make sure it was not his imagination that was playing him false.

"Well, it ain't, and that's flat!" cried Bantam, beginning to dance around in his delight. "Mr. Chamberlain has turned out to be a good deal like Santa Claus. I remember now, Mark, how he managed to pump me about your hoping to own a motorcycle some day, and when he was, when you'd saved up enough cash. And what a dunkhead I must have been not to 'a' guessed it was for you. Oh, I'm glad, Talk about luck, why, you're in up to the neck. Now will you be quiet and look at it?"

"I'll take days for me to believe it, I tell you," asserted Mark, shaking his head. "Why, I'll reckon it was a knew about this thing coming this morning; for I saw him poke his head out of the express office when we passed, and he laughed when I waved my hand. Yes, he was hatching up some scheme right then to surprise me when he came home at noon for dinner; and my coming down here with you spoiled it."

"Well, I'm glad it did, then," Bantam, joyously, "now I'll get my'maw to send right away for the mate of this dandy machine. It would be shipped 'in two by express, you know, and save lots of waiting. Say, Mark, seems to me I see dream coming true right away, now, when you and me go spinning along on that wheel, at sixty minute steel horses; but always slowing up when we see a horse ahead, because we don't want to scare the critter, you know."

They walked all around the crate to examine further what it held; and even moved it from the wall, so as to see what the other side looked like, and that no damage had resulted from its ride in the baggage freight car.

It was while they were thus handling the crated machine that some one walked into the station, and advanced leisurely toward them. Neither of the boys noticed the presence of the newcomer, and

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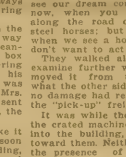

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looked up in surprise when a rasping voice, filled with cutting sarcasm and traces of anger, called out:

"Well, I must say you fellows have a lot of nerve, bothering with things that belong to other people! Suppose you put that back just where you found it, and pay attention to your own business! Your folks ought to teach you better manners than to let you loose, to poke into every package that comes here. Think because you're father is the station agent that you've got privileges, I suppose, Mark Fletcher; but he'll get called down good and hard yet, if you keep on being so nosy!"

Of course it was Ferdy Clifford. He stood there, looking black and ugly, as indeed he thought he had a right to, resting under the belief that the new motorcycle was his property, and that the boy for whom he had always felt a bitter animosity was taking liberties that he had no right to, to governing him.

Bantam stared hard, and then burst into a loud laugh, at which Ferdy scowled some more, and turned on him, saying angrily:

"Oh! you think it's a joke, do you, Bantam Lightfoot? Well, you'd better mind your own business. And if you've finished tearing that burlap loose, to examine your new motorcycle, suppose two of you let it alone, and clear out of this, or I'll go and complain to Mr. Fletcher."

"Then this here's the very boy you've got to eat your own words, Your High and Mighty Lordship," Bantam told him, mockingly. "Because I'm not the one that pens to be meddling in other people's business. Just take a squint at this same card tacked on here, and you'll understand that there are other pebbles on the beach besides Ferdy Clifford. Huh! you ain't the whole show, and the dog under the wagon, too, I guess!"

So Ferdy, with wonder written large on his face, did condescend to look down and read that magical inscription. He was plainly as much taken aback as Bantam had been, but the name of Mr. Chamberlain on the tag, as the sender of the new machine, was enough to tell him how it came that the boy was now the proud owner of a motorcycle that undoubtedly far excelled the one he owned.

"Well, that beats the Dutch!" he muttered, as the hardly able to believe his eyes; and at the same time scowling harder than ever in his disappointment.

"And are you through with my yours did you?" asked Bantam, jeeringly.

"Of course I did, because my mother has sent for a better article than the one I've been using; and it ought to be along some time soon," replied the other. "And how should I guess that anybody would be so foolish as to buy so expensive an outfit, just because a boy happened to ride one for a few days, that looked crosseyed at his little girl. But then some people know how to play the hero part so as to get notice, and praise, the prizes every time."

Mark, the humble, but managed to bite his lip and keep back the angry words that tried to get out. Not so Bantam, however, who was filled with indignation.

"Mebbe if you'd been there you'd have kicked like bull over the chance, Ferdy, because you're so very brave; but it was all my chum could do to dodge his sorrel-top rushes, and pull out the red handkerchief till I managed to lift the child over the fence. Course it didn't amount much, only that the bull had hit Mark instead of the fence the last time he charged he'd have had him thru and thru; and as Mr. Chamberlain saw the whole business, you'll have to take his word for it that he ought to get a medal, as that's the thing he'd ever heard tell about. So put that in your pipe and smoke it. Meanwhile you'd room well keep a heap clearer your company around here, while my chum is having his dandy motorcycle moved from the freight house to his home. Get that, Ferdy?"

Apparently Ferdy did, judging from the way he frowned and swallowed hard and glared at the speaker.

"Think you're smart, don't you, Bantam Lightfoot," he muttered. "Just because a gentleman happens to take a mite taken for one. Shows what your breeding is, all right. But perhaps some of these fine days you'll change your song, and from the other side of your mouth, too. Stranger things have happened, my boy, and it may so happen to be a good-natured chap, don't expect that you're always going to keep scot-free from accidents."

He gave one last meaning look at the crated motorcycle, and then turned on his heel, walking away with a proud step. But Mark was too full of joy to bother his head about Ferdy Clifford and his mean traits. He hurried over to see his father in the ticket office, while Bantam went after the expressman, who could make one load of the crate and box.

Just as Mark expected, his father had known all along that the motorcycle was coming, because Mr. Chamberlain had asked his advice; for he understood that some parents might rightly object to their boys having such a costly, as well as dangerous, present given them. He had signed to ask Mark at dinner to step down with him to the station, in order to settle a certain matter; when he would witness the utter astonishment of the boy at finding what awaited him there. But it was all just as well, and he told Mark he believed he had deserved something of this kind at the hands of the grateful Mr. Chamberlain.

"He took a great interest in you, my son," Mr. Fletcher went on to say; "and asked all sorts of questions about what you hoped to make of yourself after you left school. I believe Mr. Chamberlain means to keep track of you, and has said he hoped to be of further assistance later on, when you might be launching out on life's broad station and profession. He's a good friend to remember, Mark."

"And he's been mighty good to me, I can tell you, father!" exclaimed the boy, who was fairly bubbling over with happiness, because of the events of the last year had been fulfilled. "But it's really too much for the little I happened to do for him."

"Well," remarked Mr. Fletcher, with a smile, "some people do set considerable of a store by their children; and I suppose Mr. Chamberlain, when he thinks of what would have happened to his girl only for you, believes that this doesn't begin to square things. I know I'd feel that way if it had been my little Cissie."

Mark could see bringing a boat home, and when Mark thought of his sister being in danger from that ugly black bull, he really understood what might have been in Mr. Chamberlain's mind to have caused him to act as he had.

Then he came back to the information that the wagon was backed up, and the crated motorcycle out.

"We'll get Bantam to ride up with it to your house, Mark!" he went on to say; "and every boy that sees us will scatter the news, and you'll soon let folks know another speed-wheel has come to town!"

"And with yours to follow, Bantam," laughed Mark; "I can see the farmers up in arms, sending in a petition to regulate the speed of motorcycles on roads; yes, perhaps some of them will even want to hide out behind hedges, and try to puncture tires as they whiz past, eh, pa? But I'm ready when you are. I'm crazy to get at that fine present, and set it up for business. I've learned how to ride one the time father sent me to the city a year ago, and I stopped with my cousin, who had a motorcycle of his own, and used to run down to Coney Island with me for a passenger hanging on behind."

Ten minutes later, and the express was passing thru town, headed first of all for Bantam's house, in order to drop the box on the platform, leaving the more bulky crate.

Whenever a boy, or bunch of boys, was sighted, Bantam immediately drew their attention to the crate alongside, and with a dumb message told them that it belonged to him. Some boys, who nodded and smiled when they called out to demand if it were so. Thus the whole of Cumminsville soon got the news that Mr. Chamberlain had made a splendid thing for Bantam Lightfoot, and

some other member of the crowd Ferdy trains with, and get my nose bloodied. But he'd better go slow, for my mother will have to be counted, when her darling boy is being badly treated that way. She's got pluck enough, if I haven't that ought to have."

When the happy possessor of the brand-new machine started off again he headed for town, and passed along the main street, the chance of all observers, with every boy shouting out congratulations, and ditto envious remarks.

But then Mark felt that he could have some consideration for others, and upon seeing a pair of them dancing in anticipation of his coming, he immediately stopped short, and allowed the outfit to pass by, the driver calling out his thanks, and giving him a friendly nod in appreciation of his courtesy, so different from what Ferdy would have done, for he delighted in seeing what terror his coming was apt to inspire in man or beast.

On returning to his home, where Bantam was waiting for him, Mark was loud in his expressions of satisfaction.

"Runs like a watch, that's a fact," he went on to say, trying to describe how splendidly the new machine had worked and obeyed the slightest wish; "and when I look ahead to see what glorious times we're going to have this summer I seem to feel something that nearly takes my breath away."

"I wonder how soon mine will get here?" sighed the envious Bantam.

"You mailed the letter with the check in it at noon, and it is gone on the 1:30 train, so they ought to get it the first thing in the morning, if not this afternoon," Mark went on to say, reflectively. "Well, making allowance for a little delay they could ship the thing day after tomorrow, and you'd have it next Monday, I should think."

"Three long days to wait," sighed the other boy, dolefully.

"Oh! you might hurry them up some by wiring in tomorrow that unless they could start it before night you couldn't use the machine; and chances are they'd get a move on in a hurry."

"That's a fine idea, Mark, and p'raps I'll do the same!" exclaimed Bantam, who always believed that everything his chum suggested was the best first-class.

"But the time will soon pass," his friend assured him, "and if you can't hold out, I might let you take a few lessons on my wheel."

"Oh, thank you, Mark. That was a kind thing to say; tho perhaps I'd better wait till I get my own machine. If it ran away with me I'd feel worse if I happened to be riding your property than if it was my own."

"I don't believe you'd have time to bother about who owned it, because, don't you see, you'd have to put all your time in trying to stop things, Bantam, and while we're talking about that same thing, I want to show you several ways in which you might bring the runaway to a halt, if you got in a fix. The makers have looked out for all that, because they know how mean it must be to just sit there with your steel horse going lickety-split at a mile-a-minute gait, and you not able to do a thing to slow up."

So for a time Bantam took lessons, and seemed to enjoy handling the various parts connected with the beautiful machine.

"Where do you mean to keep it tonight, Mark?" he asked, presently.

"Well, the only good place I know about is that old toolhouse away back in the grounds. I can shift some things around and make room for it there," Mark replied.

"And is there a lock on the door?" continued Bantam.

"Yes," his chum replied; "but the door itself isn't extra strong; because, you know, there have been only tools for the garden kept in there, the lawn mower and such things; and no one would ever think of stealing such traps."

"Um! Couldn't you do something to strengthen that place, Mark?"

"Not today, anyhow," answered the other, dubiously; "tho later I might put a new door on the little building and a shutter over the window."

"Is that window big enough for a feller to crawl thru?" Bantam asked.

"He might get in if he was small enough, but ten to one you'd never crawl over the sill, Bantam."

"All right; you want to nail some good stout pieces of plank over it before you shut up for the night; and Mark, I'd have my window open if I was you."

"I always do, winter and summer, for that matter," replied the other; "but what's on your mind now, Bantam?"

"Oh, well, perhaps I'm wronging that high-minded chap, Ferdy Clifford," muttered the stout boy, "but somehow I've got a hunch that you might have visitors between supper time and daybreak."

"You mean they'd be low enough to try and break in so as to slash the tires of my motorcycle, or mark all over the body of the machine so that it'd look as if it was second-hand—is that it, Bantam?"

"Just about what was on my mind, old feller; and don't you make the mistake of thinking that Ferdy wouldn't do such a nasty trick, for I won't, himself, but there's that Dan Powers always ready to carry out the slick schemes that Ferdy hatches up. I'd be mighty careful not to let them ketch me asleep if I was you."

"Well, perhaps you're right there, Bantam, and I'm glad you spoke about it; but what's to hinder you staying over with me tonight? Then we could be in a position to do something worth while, if so be we heard any suspicious noise."

"I'll take you up on that dare, Mark, sure I will!" exclaimed the stout boy, eagerly; "and here, what's to keep us from rigging up some sort of trap that'll tell us if any prowler comes around while we're asleep?"

"There you go, getting ahead of me again," laughed the other; "and yet you keep on saying that you never think up a single thing. That's a boss idea, and we'll be sure to fix it. After it gets dusk we'll run cords on low stakes close to the ground so that the fellow would be sure to get caught, and make a weight close by our bed drop. And while we're about it, Bantam, we'll keep the old shotgun loaded, and handy, to blaze away out of the window if we're waked up. That'll make him run like fits, I tell you."

The rest of that afternoon the boys spent doing numerous things, and in admiring the new present. Just as Bantam was thinking of going home for his supper, so as to let his mother know that he would stay with his chum overnight, he told Mark to notice that Mrs. Powers was riding past on his old wheel, and that he had seen him look over toward where they were standing at the time with a broad grin on his face. When Dan Powers assumed that expression it usually meant trouble for some one.

In due time Bantam once more showed up, and was assured by his chum that the trap had been neatly set, with several cords running into the bedroom occupied by Mark, on the lower floor of the house. The members of the family had all been duly warned not to be alarmed if they should hear a gun go off during the night, and had promised to try to keep from shrieking out.

The boys spent a pleasant evening, much of the time laying glorious plans for certain excursions which they hoped to be able to carry out when the other motorcycle arrived, and they could go off together.

Finally, the time for retiring having arrived, they sought their bed. Mark tested the strings leading out of the open window, and announced that they seemed to be in good condition for service. Then he put a loaded shell in each barrel of the old shotgun, which was placed where it could be readily snatched up in case of emergency. Satisfied that everything had been arranged as agreed on, the boys tumbled into bed; and being more or less tired, were not long in going to sleep.

Of course the alarm came, just as Bantam had figured would be the case. Neither of the lads had any idea of the time of night, tho the first thing they saw was that the moon was shining brightly, which must mean that it was after twelve; for it had not been due to rise until eleven, being in the decline.

And that heavy weight which Mark had fixed certainly did come down with a loud crack when the cord was broken somewhere outdoors; both boys sprang up as tho they had suddenly been brought in touch with a galvanic battery, and were out of bed in a twinkling.

Further chapters of this highly interesting story will be found in the Ledger issue of next week. Read it. If you are not a regular subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The Ledger is only $1.00 per year.

"You've got to eat your own words!"

A Tense Moment.

Glancing cautiously about, they kissed and settled close together on the spacious sofa.

"I wonder where that dear little brother is, darling?" inquired she.

"The little wretch! I hope he isn't underneath!"

She rose and searched the recess that in every sofa sometimes sequesters a little brother, using his cane in the exploration.

"No," she said, still exploring, "we're safe from him for the present. But there was a startling noise as she gave a parting dig with the cane, and a small dog ran out with continued protest.

"The dear spinster aunt's pup," he queried.

"Yes. And I hate the beast!" In no gentle manner she helped the animal to decision.

"And the dear aunt's ear—do you imagine it is in the immediate neighborhood?"

"Haven't I told you, dearest, that she is quite deaf?"

"How about her eye—either eye?"

"This sofa is removed from the range of any keyhole, dear."

They settled down and kissed again.

"I wish your father were as easy as your mother, dear," he ventured.

"Easy?"

"About us. I mean. She knows our secret."

"And approves of you, darling. I'm a little apprehensive as to papa myself."

"Would you marry me if he were to object?"

"Do you mean elopement?"

"Why not, if it should be necessary?" He drew her to him and they kissed again.

"Oh, I should just love to elope!"

"But I hope it will not be necessary. I should prefer to have all things regular and conventional. Yet I fear your father is a stern man, and set in his way."

"But what objection could he possibly make to you? You are handsome"—more kisses—"and of a good family. And you have money. That would be the main thing with papa."

"Does he, then, think so much of mere dross?"

"Everything, I'm afraid. If we——"

Her thought was interrupted by an opening door. Her father, with an ominous frown, came toward them. It was a tense moment. He looked at them both, as tho in doubt, and then to his daughter:

"Your mother has just told me this young man is making love to you—that he desires to marry you. Will you leave me with him for a moment?"

She rose apprehensively. Approaching the door, she looked back at them steadily. Her father was an irascible man—sometimes unreasonable—and in a matter so vital, what might not happen? What if they should quarrel? What if her father should strike her lover? He did. But it was only for fifty.—Judge.

Timely Invention.

Travelers in the future may have their comfort greatly increased on shipboard. A newly invented self-leveling berth has been installed in the staterooms of a large steamer. This berth is provided with a short swing, by means of which it adapts itself to the motion of the ship and remains always at the same level, thereby greatly lessening the tendency to seasickness. The swinging motion is hardly noticed in connection with the movement of the vessel in a rough sea.

AGENTS WANTED

Fish Bite like hungry wolves any time, if you use Magic Fish Lures. Best fish bait ever discovered. Keeps you busy putting them up. Write quick and get a box to help introduce it. Agents wanted. Walton Supply Co., Dept. 34, Louis, Mo

GOLD shell Spectacles $1 a Pair Send for catalog. Agents wanted Coulter Optical Co., Dept. A, Chicago, Ill.

BIG MAIL FREE! POST OFFICE Would you like to get a lot of letters, postcards and packages? You probably have numerous friends, relatives and acquaintances and collaborators and addresses for the purpose of sending samples, advertising matter, pages and circulars. Good! Send your name and addresses and we will send you free and postpaid 25 cards with addresses carefully arranged in our AGENT'S DIRECTORY LIST one hundred addresses carefully arranged in our Agent's Directory Lists to help you. Remember for good names to send advertising matter to, so the printer will not make a mistake; be sure to give your street number and town also plainly write your name so that any one can read it. You will reach you without fail. We have had the Agent's Directory List for several years and refer you to the editor of this paper who will tell you we send as we say we will. Send your name in silver and we will enter you in our Agent's Directory List as above stated. Write today. Address

Agent's Directory List, Indiana, Pa.

Law Should Stop Sale of Leg-Strap and Spring Trusses

Wrong To Buy Anything For Rupture Without Getting 60 Days Trial

Depending on leg-strap or spring trusses—like shown below—is little less than criminal. They are almost sure to shorten your life. It's next to impossible to make them hold without hurting. They are simply a curse to man.

Away With Leg-Strap and Spring Trusses

So far as we know, our guaranteed rupture holder is the only thing of its kind or character that you can get on 60 days' trial—the only thing we know of good enough to merit such a long and thorough test. It's the famous Clutha principle—has 18 patented features. Self-adjusting—cannot slip—no matter how much pulling, straining or twisting you use—instead, to hold at all times—including times you are working, at work, at play. Has rear adjustment. Has pocket for extra pad. Has no metal to rust, rot or break. Has only 4 straps, all of which are concealed. Has no leg-straps to chafe or cut. Has no spring to break. Has no steel girdle to compress the abdomen. Has no hard pad to gouge you

Ledger Embroidery

We call the attention of every woman to the beauty of the patterns displayed from week to week, and wish to impress upon each one the splendid quality of material that makes our offer a great bargain in every case. Every offer is complete. You can finish it up without buying anything extra. These designs are stamped on the best quality cloth, and every set comes to you complete, exactly as described. You are sure to find many articles that you want if you watch the Ledger each week, and it is so easy to get them. Any person can get one or all of the designs shown by sending us the amount of subscriptions to either the Chicago Ledger or Saturday Blade, required in the description under each article.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

Either the Chicago Ledger or Saturday Blade $1.00 a year each; 6 months for 50 cents. The Blade and Ledger together $1.50 a year (52 issues); 6 months for 75 cents; 4 months 50 cents.

.....CUT THIS OUT AND SEND WITH ORDER.....

CHICAGO LEDGER, 509-514 North Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois.

Embroidery Department:—

Enclosed please find $ .....for.....subscription to
(Name Time)

the.....Please send me free of all cost the
(Ledger or Blade or Both)

embroidery outfit No.....

NAME .....

P. O. .....

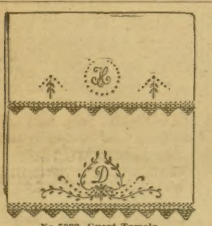
Street No. or R. F. D.....

Town .....State.....

This is a.....Subscription.
(New or Renewal)

No. 521, Fancy Work Outfit.

NO. 521, FANCY WORK OUTFIT.—Did you ever in your extreme youth buy a jumbo bag? If you did you will remember that for one cent you received in a paper bag some popcorn and so many pieces of various kinds of candy that you wondered how in the world it could be sold so cheaply. This fancy work outfit will remind you of those days. It consists of 1 centerpiece and 6 doilies to match, stamped on fine white linene; 1 bone stiletto for punching holes for eyelet embroidery; 10 assorted embroidery needles; 3 skeins of embroidery cotton; 1 cake of Superior stamping preparation; 1 distributor; complete directions for transferring perforated patterns. The designs consist of corset covers, shirtwaist, collars and cuffs, baby cap, baby bib, calendars, complete alphabet and many others. Given for a year's subscription to the Blade or the Ledger for $1.00.



No 5032, Guest Towels.

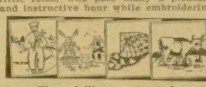
NO. 5032, GUEST TOWELS.—Crocheted and embroidered towels are most popular and fashionable at the present time, and undoubtedly will continue so for several years to come. The two towels shown here are of serviceable grade huck toweling, each measures 14x24 inches, and they are stamped with a very simple design. With each set we supply you with one set of initial transfers (four different styles), one ball of fast color, blue crocheting cotton; three crochet needles, and four skeins of white floss for embroidering the two designs. This complete outfit given for $2.00 in subscriptions, new or renewal, to either the Blade or Ledger.

NO. 4028, MENDING BAG.—Every woman needs an article of this kind, as there are always things that should be mended, and this receptacle will save you lots of time if you will use it. The material is white Irish linen and the design, which, as you see, includes the words, "Never too late to mend," is very appropriate and attractive when you have embroidered it. Four skeins of mercerized floss are included in this offer. Sent for a $1.00 subscription to

No. 4028, Mending Bag.

either the Ledger or the Blade, or for $1.00 in subscriptions to both papers.

NO. 5023, KINDERGARTEN DOILIES.—They are always very popular with the little folks, who pass many a pleasant and instructive hour while embroidering



them. These doilies are stamped on one piece of material and each doily measures 9 inches square. Included in this offer are one package of needles, six skeins of floss, and an 8-page illustrated embroidery booklet. The set will be given for a year's subscription, new or renewal, to either the Blade or the Ledger, for $1.00.

No. 23, "Home, Sweet Home" Pillow Top.

NO. 23, "HOME, SWEET HOME" PILLOW TOP.—This pillow top is tinted in natural colors on ecru art cloth, size 21x21 inches. With it we include tan holland back and six skeins of colored floss. Given free with a $1.00 year's subscription, new or renewal, to the Blade or the Ledger.

NO. 5031, FUDGE APRON—During the coming months, when parties and entertainments are the social features in every home, the young lady or girl will have many an occasion for the use of a fudge apron. This apron is ¾ length, slip-over, stamped on good quality National white crash and we include 3 skeins of floss for working the design. Given for $1.50 in subscriptions to the Blade or Ledger.

No. 5031, Fudge Apron.

PATTERN COUPONS FREE!

Hundreds of Patterns to Select From

The great difficulty in making one's own garments is to get suitable patterns. Our women readers could make many pretty and useful things for themselves and their children if they could get well-made patterns. We have arranged to give our readers a pattern service unexcelled.

We have a splendid offer of the best and most fashionable patterns that can be produced by the greatest designers of New York and Paris, and what is more, these patterns will be within the reach of every one, and every one will have a wide selection to choose from. Read our splendid offer below.

9018 Blouse with Jabot Frills, 34 to 42 bust.
9100 Yoke Skirt, 24 to 32 waist.

9067 Chemise, Small 34 or 36, Medium 38 or 40, Large 42 or 44 bust.

9084 Girl's Dress, 8 to 14 years.

9093 Bathing Suit for Misses and Small Women, 16 and 18 years.

9009 Straight Skirt with Yoke, 24 to 30 waist.

9004 Child's Dress, 2 and 4 years.

9099 Girl's Belted Dress, 8 to 12 years.

8968 Boy's Suit, 3, 4 and 5 years.

HOW TO GET THE FREE PATTERNS

Here is the way we will do it: To every one who will send us one dollar for a year's subscription to the Chicago Ledger we will send absolutely free five pattern coupons. Each coupon will be good for one pattern and you can select the patterns from those illustrated in any issue of the Chicago Ledger. Then you are a patron that you like all you have to do is to send us a coupon and it will be sent to you at once. In this way you will have hundreds of patterns from which to pick the five that you will be entitled to, and you have all the time you need to pick out the ones you want.

These patterns are the best that can be made. Each pattern gives full directions for the cutting and making, with information as to the amount of cloth required, etc., so that any one can make any of the designs illustrated with no trouble at all. At the same time, they are so stylish and accurately cut that dressmakers and seamstresses all over the country will be quick to take advantage of this liberal offer. Some will subscribe for two years so they can get ten coupons. These patterns are made by the best designers and models of New York and Paris, and are up-to-the-minute in fashion and beauty.

We treat old and new customers alike on this splendid offer. If you are already a subscriber send in a dollar and we will send you the five pattern coupons and extend your subscription one year from the time it now expires.

To get these five coupons entitling you to five patterns, fill out the blank below and enclose it with one dollar for a year's subscription to the Chicago Ledger. Do this now—today! No woman should be without the Ledger's Pattern Coupon Book. Be among the thousands of women who will get these coupons.

.....CUT THIS OUT AND SEND TO US.....

THE CHICAGO LEDGER, 509 N. Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill.

Enclosed please find one dollar for a year's subscription to the Chicago Ledger. This entitles me to Five Pattern Coupons. Canada Subscription Price $1.50 per year.

NAME.....

Street No. or R. F. D.....

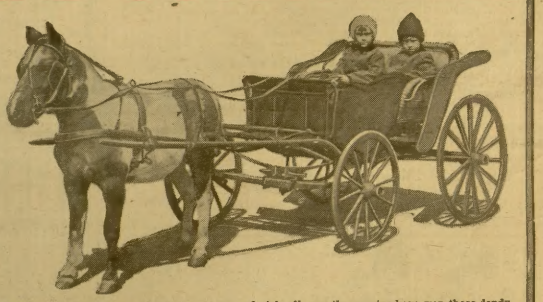
Box.....Town.....

This is a.....Subscription. State.....
(New or Renewal)

If you wish any pattern from those advertised in this issue, mark the number and size on the margin and we will retain a coupon for each pattern we send you when we send you the Coupon Book. (Order by size and number.) Coupons good for six months.

"CHUM" AND OUTFIT FREE

"Chum" is the most beautiful and lovable pony you ever saw; a full-blooded, registered Shetland Pony about 42 inches high and weighing about 300 pounds, just like you see in the picture. With "Chum" we send a complete outfit consisting of pony carriage, nickel silver-mounted harness, saddle and bridle. "Chum" and the entire outfit will be sent to the winner free of all charges. There is nothing to pay for, not even express. We pay everything and deliver "Chum" and outfit right to you



Wouldn't you be the proudest and happiest person in the world if you owned "Chum" and his outfit? You can do it if you will solve the puzzle and mail the coupon now, right away. Think of the fun you could have with "Chum," taking your friends out for a drive or riding him on horseback to school. "Chum" knows lots of tricks now and learns tricks very easily. A real Shetland Pony like "Chum" is the most companionable and friendly pony that you ever saw.

Hundreds of boys and girls all over the country have won these dandy ponies. They won them by starting early. As soon as they saw the advertisement and puzzle they went to work to solve it and so got a great big start in the contest. Don't let any one tell you that you cannot win "Chum" and his outfit, for you get an early start if you answer this advertisement right away.

SOLVE THE PUZZLE NOW AND GET TWO THOUSAND FREE VOTES

To test your quickness, to put you on your mettle and to give you a good running start we are printing the pony prize puzzle shown below. This picture shows two of our friends driving a beautiful pony like the one we are going to give away. In this picture there are six partly hidden faces which it will be lots of fun for you to find. It is not so easy to find the faces in this picture, but by close search and turning and twisting the picture around you can find them. Can you find them? You will win a prize if you do. Try it. It will pay you.

When you have discovered at least four of these faces mark each one with a cross (X), cut out the picture, send your name and address on the coupon below it and mail it to us. Inclose with it two 2c stamps to help pay the cost of postage and mailing of a special prize which we will send you. We know you will appreciate it and that it will be a big surprise to you.

We will also make you a present of 2,000 Free Pony Votes and tell you all about this splendid pony which we are going to give away with a full set of harness and beautiful pony cart, saddle and bridle. We are also going to give away other prizes for just a little effort on your part.

We want to impress on you that it is very necessary to start at once. It doesn't matter where you live. We are determined to give "Chum" and his outfit to some boy or girl absolutely free, and it may as well be you as any one else. If you don't win, it will be your own fault. We are going to do our part to help you win.

LIBERAL REWARDS TO ALL

This is the most liberal contest ever announced, and it is so arranged that whether you win "Chum" and outfit or not, if you take part in the contest and start off now with the 2,000 Free Votes we give you, we guarantee that you will be richly rewarded for everything, little or big, that you do. Remember, you get the extra rewards right away. There is no waiting or delay until the end of the contest to get your special prizes or cash rewards.

Up here in our big building we have boxes and boxes of golden treasures that are yours almost for the asking. During the contest we will give away hundreds of bicycles, watches, bracelets, flashlights, and many other presents, too numerous to mention. Our plan is so simple that it seems more like a dream than a reality. Everybody gets a prize. We are a big company and delight in giving away expensive premiums to advertise our great weekly papers. Get your share of these presents. Solve the puzzle and mail the coupon now, before you turn this page. Get in on this great prize distribution, and you will be mighty glad.

EASIEST CONTEST OF ALL

Easiest contest devised. Our plan is different from others. There are no losers in this contest, and those who show that they really want to win we are ready to help. Start today and you can win this beautiful Shetland Pony, "Chum," and his outfit without any cost to you.

ANSWER THIS AD TODAY

Find at least four of the six partly hidden faces in the puzzle picture, mark each with a cross, fill out the coupon, cut out the picture and coupon and mail it to us with two 2c stamps to help pay the postage and mailing expenses of the dandy big surprise present that we will send you. We will also send you a certificate of entry in the pony contest and give you 2,000 Free Votes toward winning "Chum" and his outfit. There are no losers. Every one gets a prize for everything that he or she does and you are not limited to any one prize alone, for you can get many easily—besides, you want "Chum" and his outfit and we are going to help you win it.

DON'T WAIT—DON'T DELAY—MAIL THIS COUPON TODAY ➡

Do not delay another minute, but solve the puzzle and write your name and address on the coupon and mail it to us, inclosing two 2c stamps to help pay the cost of mailing the prize we will give you for solving the puzzle. It is dangerous to delay. We want you to win "Chum" and his outfit, and we will help you if you will show that you are quick. The quicker you are to mail the coupon, the better your chance will be for winning. Mail the coupon right away. Address

W. D. BOYCE COMPANY PONY CONTEST MANAGER Department L
500-514 North Dearborn Street, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

SOLVE THE PUZZLE AND WIN A PRIZE

This picture shows two of our friends driving a beautiful pony, like the one we are going to give away. In this picture there are six partly hidden faces which it will be lots of fun for you to find. It is not so easy to find the faces in the picture, but by close search and by twisting and turning the picture around they will be revealed to you. Can you find them?

YOU WILL WIN A PRIZE

if you do. Try it, don't give up. It will pay you. When you have discovered four of these faces mark each with a cross (X), cut out the picture and mail it to us with two 2c stamps to help pay the postage and mailing expenses of the present which you win. We will also send you the Certificate of Entry and **2,000 free votes** in our pony contest and we will tell you all about this splendid pony which we are going to give away with a full set of harness, a beautiful pony cart and also a saddle and bridle. We will also tell you about the other presents we have for you.

W. D. BOYCE COMPANY
Pony Contest Manager, Department L.
500-514 N. Dearborn St., Chicago, Illinois.

Gentlemen:—I have marked the four faces on the picture puzzle which I am sending you together with two 2c stamps to help pay the postage and mailing expense of the prize you have for me. Please tell me how I can become the owner of "Chum," with the harness, pony carriage, saddle and bridle, delivered to me absolutely free. Also send me my certificate of entry and 2,000 free votes toward winning "Chum." Let me know also how to earn cash commissions and the many splendid presents you have for me.

My name is.....

R. F. D.
Box No.....St. No. or P. O.....

Town.....

State.....